Far West Sketches

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FAR-WEST SKETCHES

BY

JESSIE BENTON FRÉMONT

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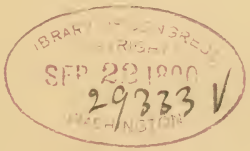

BOSTON

D. LOTHROP COMPANY

WASHINGTON STREET OPPOSITE BROMFIELD

1890

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FAR-WEST SKETCHES

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I.

CHRISTMAS IN LOTOS-LAND.

"*Kens't du das land.*"

A CHRISTMAS day all sunshine and roses — a Sunday and Christmas-day in one; peace within, and all about us good-will.

We got in the night before, Christmas Eve, and now with the long journey across our huge continent ended in safety for our invalid, and this sunshine-land for ally, our anxieties could cease.

It seemed like the waking from a bad dream. Back of us lay the sudden illness, the warning to "get away to a warm climate, while it is yet time, and risk no more Northern winters."

Then the hurried start — the dropping of all other home ties — of all occupations and aims in life to keep life itself — all the wrenching and uprooting, keenly felt but held under by the necessity for action not feeling, were changed now into peace and hope.

We had known well where to go:

> "There are no rough breezes blowing
> In that fair land where we are going"

— where neither summer heat nor winter cold could harm, and for us it was gilded by the morning splendor of young memories.

The cold black Atlantic was washing against the snow-covered Jersey coast as we ran up to New York, and cold and snow were with us in the early, early drive across Washington, not too early to find dear baby faces watching for us at the window — rushing out regardless of weather with shouts of welcome to bring us in close to the bright fire, to pour out a happy confusion of joy and eager hospitality — "right

here, in the big chair by the fire you are to have your tea — and we are to come to dinner to-day — and it's going to be Christmas, soon."

"Next Sunday," says accurate Jack.

"Yes, next Sunday," echoes Baby Juliet, "Christmas soon, next Sunday, yes-ter-day," her one date.

They were so full of joyful pride in welcoming us to their house, after the happy seaside summer with us, and so beautifully intent on their young hospitality that we all met it in the same spirit. That one day of halt in the journey should also be a day of rest from troubled thought. "Do not poison to-day with to-morrow," a wise kind physician told me long ago, so we were led by a little child and made it Juliet's "yesterday" — a home-day that keeps always "the tender grace of a day that is gone."

One little one declared she would go with us. She was staggered when it was represented to her that she would then miss the Christmas-Tree

and the presents, but soon she rallied to her purpose.

"Then I will wait," she said, climbing to the arms always so glad to hold her; and nestling her pink cheek against the gray moustache she gave her plan (in that bright lexicon of baby-hood there is no such word as impossible). "As soon as I wake after the Tree I will go to the engine house and tell the driver to hurry and catch up — oh! — please tell your driver to drive slow, because I am coming as soon as the Tree is over, and when we catch up with you I will say thank you, and get on your train and go on with you."

Later the nurse came for help to stop the little one from "rummaging the closets and drawers." She had decided that "eight dresses will do, but they must be my best," and her slim hands were busy "packing" them.

We had to go on. Night settled on us installed in warmth and the luxury of comfort American travel has devised. Our immense

continent with its huge upheaved mountain chains no longer means weary travel, hardly weary distance. To us the overland journey comes always with fresh delight in the contrast with past experiences. "The West" in my early day meant a two weeks' journey to St. Louis then a frontier town. Now one week takes you from sea to sea, so surrounded by home-comforts that it is more a resting-break than a journey. And all the time you find new reasons for pride in the great country traveled over.

We looked back through the gathering night and falling snow to the dome of the Capitol, so often our last land-mark of home, and though we spoke bravely of its welcoming us back on many happy returns, yet of what we felt most just then we did not speak.

Soon came new ideas. A stop for supper was called out at "Manassas Junction," and at that name the years rolled back to that ordeal of the nation — that time of partings — of un-

returning feet — of great aims and great deeds, and in its mighty shadow personal pain felt rebuked.

And so, on and on, down the valley of the rushing Kanawha where I as a child had so often traveled among welcoming relations from one Virginia home to another, through Kentucky past more battle memories and more names recalling family homes and united feelings; then the straight descent of the noble Mississippi valley — to me inseparable from my father.

You come upon the Great River just above Memphis. A swell of far-past but never dimmed memories came with the view of the mighty stream, its tawny waters shining in the glow of the setting sun.

Because I was fortunate in living from my youth up with the prophets and wise men of the Great West I see it and know its conquering growth as I would have you young people of the East see it.

We had come into softer drier air after the Alleghanies made our shelter from Atlantic winds, and in pleasant Kentucky we saw no snow; instead the trees and pastures were still green.

We had not dared to look back or question the wisdom of our sudden move. Now we saw it was being justified by improving conditions. And the interest in unfamiliar country traveled over was great. Especially when we ran along between level rich sugar estates; but even here the winter began to overtake us. We drove across New Orleans and crossed the river in a driving sleet storm. Harsh weather was a new feature there, but again familiar names of streets recalled a far past and my father, and the high-walled gardens of Esplanade street still had their orange-trees though the oranges now glistened through icy coating.

From here, on, through Louisiana, through Texas and New Mexico, even through heated lower Arizona it was a neck-and-neck race with

our enemy winter. A winter so exceptional and cruel that even in these low latitudes sleet, ice, driving cold winds and rains kept pace with us. Long icicles fringed the water tanks. We needed our furs and winter wraps although a soft warmth kept the Pullman car healthily comfortable. Even at Yuma, which disputes with Aden the palm for heat, there was skim-ice about the grounds of the hotel where we breakfasted; but the blue sky, and orange-trees loaded with fruit promised return to usual conditions. Then followed the dip of over three hundred feet below the sea level; usually a stifling passage across the desert sandy basin of what was once the head of the Gulf of California but just now only agreeably warm. Farewell now to winter, for we were safe at last in the summer land! Coming up on the far side of the Basin we met the fresh yet soft air of the Pacific Ocean and entered a region of rich valleys and gentle hills with pastures and orchards and pretty farmhouses and, what as night

closed in, was as beautiful after days of travel through silent wastes — the close succession of brightly-lighted villages and towns with large stations and many people waiting "to go to town."

And into the town we ran, Christmas Eve — only two hours behind time on the long journey from sea to sea.

Before we were fairly in dear friends had met us and we realized by their sympathy of look and manner what a haggard-looking lot we were.

From the railway carriage which had been our secluded quiet home for a week we emerged into a glare of gas and electric lights, the noise, the crowd, the crush of a busy city — a stunning change.

It was a long drive to the hotel, but every image of repose was waiting us. Real beds, large separate rooms, tea by a quiet stationary table, and to feel we were no longer attached to a time-table made us gratefully content. For

some days we reeled to and fro unexpectedly, for the journey is trying. But it was safely over. The cough was almost over too, though some months after. our friend who knew us all intimately said he had feared that night there was no "lift" again for either of us. It had been a race for life against winter and Life won.

. . . . . .

Christmas morning came with warm blue sky and sweet sunshine. Up the street between tall business houses we could look to Fort Hill, where forty years before our rescued invalid had planted a battery and raised our Flag. And where the loveliness of nature and climate entered his heart and never left it. To come back here was to renew younger life and find new strength.

What a *wonderschön* drive we had that Christmas-day — all manner of surprises delighted us. It was only eight years since I had seen it — a very quiet little town still in its cocoon

of Californian indifference to American push. "Why trouble for more, when we have enough?" But transcontinental railways push too hard for inertness or resistance, and now it was a big city never to know quiet again. The low hills and flowery plains browsed over by countless sheep had become a spreading city with outlying villages and farmsteads and market gardens, and everywhere the once open view was broken by long avenues and thickets of the tall Australian gum-tree, its marked blue-green (peacock-blue) in contrast with the rich dark-green of the orchards on orchards, and avenues of the orange now covered with its golden fruit, and the exquisite feathery pale-green of the pepper-tree which makes here, as in modern Athens, the chosen shade-tree. Pretty cottages — very "seaside" many of them — were everywhere on smooth lawns of blue grass, their piazzas veiled by fragrant roses climbing to the roof — the pure white Lamarque, the yellow Marêchal Neil, saffron, red and rich pink roses

in loveliest luxuriance. Geraniums were for hedges — they grow so fast, and are held as "common"; calla-lilies are used in the same way for the same reasons; they are often planted along the narrow water-ways which are as much part of the town system as are the pavements.

The abundant water runs in these fixed open channels at fixed rates and times under the active supervision of a "zanjero"* (in American "the sankey-man," as we say the ice-man or the milkman), and the tall lilies flourish with a luxuriance of dark-green leaves and big white flowers that would at once delight and distress an Eastern florist in his calculation for church decoration.

Flowers we coddle in warm rooms were here small trees with the birds going about their

* The Moors left their enduring mark on Spain in their system of irrigation reproduced here by the early Spanish priests, and keeping through time and changes of all kinds the original Moorish names of "zanja and "zanjero" for the open water-conduits, and the official charged to oversee their proper use.

nest-building among them — busiest and loudest and sweetest the mocking-bird, building fitly in trees of roses, heliotropes and citronalis, and oleanders with white and splendid rose-colored blossoms.

It was wonderfully gay and inspiriting to see all this beautiful life in contrast to the winter just behind us.

The lovely valley is rimmed about by ranges of mountains rising from green foot-hills to the dark Sierra, snow-crowned. Its glittering summits made the culminating touch of beauty — and the defense for us — "so far, but no farther," its snow-peaks said.

Even the trees were in color. The pimento — pepper-tree — has feathery fern-like foliage of tender white-green with long clusters of berries, the size and clear color of red currants. It is such a fresh, refined and graceful tree that I do not wonder it was chosen as the decorative tree in the new Athens where it borders the avenues and parks. By it, here, grows the

noble Norfolk pine with its star-shaped boughs graduated until the lofty top has a horizontal five-pointed star crowning all. When we saw one of these growing by two giant palms, there came irresistibly to mind the early story of the Christmas in Judea.

We were now in the new and broader residence quarter, the avenues of orange, of pepper-trees, of fan-palm became longer, the lawns spread into greater size, and the large houses back in their grounds were pictures of beauty from the masses of delicate foliage and lovely color about them. Turning into the gates of one of these our friend said it was growing too warm for our wraps, and we would leave them at that house.

"But can we?"

"O, yes! I know them there. They will be very glad to have you drive through, or, if you will, come in."

We drove very slowly up a long carriage-way bordered by a hedge of glowing geraniums, and

on the other side chrysanthemums, with verbenas as a foot-rug; then a turn between six-foot-high hedges of cypress trimmed to velvety smoothness brought us to such a pleasaunce! On its fine turf were magnolias, cypress, locust and almond-trees, and two huge India rubber-trees, all from twenty to thirty feet high, and the house up to the second floor was masked by roses, honeysuckle and a gorgeous orange colored creeper in cascades of blooms — while everywhere were the perfume of violets and song of birds.

Fancy this, after the black Atlantic and the pursuing snow and cold.

And all this growth, from grass to trees, was not yet eight years old.

We were so entranced we did not notice the carriage had stopped by the lotos-pond. Our friend had taken out the wraps and a lady was coming down the steps with a smile of welcome in her gentle blue eyes.

"Yes," she said, "you are to get out — and

luncheon is waiting you — I am at home here, and so are you."

My letters home that evening were all out of shape with rose-leaves and violets and such-like sweet vouchers that we were safe where winter could not follow, and in their own dear silent way carried messages of comforting and hope.

II.

HOW THE GOOD NEWS CAME OUT FROM THE WEST.

EDISON says he will work at his latest invention "until it registers sounds now lost to our grosser senses."

I would like to tell you of a singular transmission of knowledge between far distant points, which he may yet be able to explain. For it was akin to the telephone, only sublimated.

It would have been a ghost story pure and simple in older times; but to be in keeping with to-day it is but a beautiful fact, which Science may yet reduce to useful practice.

I was so used to his safe returns from every danger that I had become fairly reasonable about Mr. Frémont's journeys, and my wise loving father took care I should have my mind and

time usefully filled. We could not look to hear from Mr. Frémont on the unoccupied line of country he was exploring that winter of 1853–54; he must first reach the close at San Francisco, and our first news must come by the Isthmus route of Panama; at the earliest, midsummer. But in midwinter, without any reason, I became possessed by the conviction that he was starving; nor could any effort reason this away. No such impression had ever come to me before, although more than once dreadful suffering, and even deaths from starvation, had befallen his other expeditions.

This time it came upon me as a fact I could not turn from. It fairly haunted me for nearly two weeks, until, young and absolutely healthy as I was, it made a physical effect on me. Sleep and appetite were broken up, and in spite of my father's and my own efforts to dissipate it by reasoning, by added open-air life, nothing dulled my sense of increasing suffering from hunger to Mr. Frémont and his party.

This weight of fear was lifted from me as suddenly as it had come.

My house was near that of my father's, and the younger part of his family when returning from parties often came to me for the remainder of the night that the elders might not have their sleep broken. In this way one of my sisters and a cousin came to me after a wedding ball at General Jessup's. The drive home was long and over rough frozen streets, and it was nearly one o'clock when they came in — glad enough of the bright room and big wood fire waiting them. As girls do, they took off their ball dresses and made themselves comfortable with loose woollen gowns and letting down their hair, while I, only too pleased just then to have an excuse for staying up with others, made them tea as we talked over the evening and the bride.

The fire was getting low and I went into the adjoining dressing-room to bring in more wood. It was an old-fashioned big fireplace and the

sticks were too large to grasp with the hand; as I half-knelt, balancing the long sticks on my left arm, a hand rested lightly on my left shoulder, and Mr. Frémont's voice, pleased and laughing, whispered my name. There was no sound beyond the quick-whispered name — no presence, only the touch — that was all. But I knew (as one knows in dreams) that it was Mr. Frémont, gay, and intending to startle my sister whose ready scream always freshly amused him.

Silently I went back into the girls' room with the wood, but before I could speak my sister, looking up to take a stick from me, gave a great cry and fell in a heap on the rug.

"What have you seen?" called out our cousin, Mary Benton, the most steady-nerved, even-natured of women then as now.

I had not yet spoken; this was all in a flash together. When I said it was Mr. Frémont — that he touched my shoulder for me to "keep still and let him scare Susy" — then the poor child screamed again and again. We crushed

her ball dress over her head to keep the sound from the neighbors, but it was difficult to quiet her.

The girls had been distressed by my fixed idea of danger to Mr. Frémont and knew how out of condition it had made me. Their first thought now was that my mind had broken down. They soon realized this was not so as we discussed the strange fact of my knowing — knowing — and so surely that peace came back to me — that whatever he had had to bear was over; that he was now safe and light of heart; and that in some way he himself had told me so.

We talked long and the girls were too excited for sleep, though the unreliable little French clock chimed three. But a blessed rest had fallen on me and I went off to "a sleep that sank into my soul" deep and dreamless, from which I did not wake until ten the next day, when my eyes opened to see my father sitting by my bedside. He had been guarding my

sleep a long time — in fact the whole household were protecting it as the crisis of a fever.

The girls had watched near me until morning when they went over and told my father, who had in our family physician, Dr. Lindsley, to look at me. But both recognized it to be healthy refreshing sleep; my color had returned and the strained anxious expression was gone — more than any words this told to practiced eyes that some electric change had restored "the peaceful currents of the blood."

With sleep and appetite strength soon returned, but the true "good-medicine" was my absolute certainty of safety for Mr. Frémont.

My father's first words to me had been, "Child, you have seen a vision?" and lawyer-like he questioned and cross-questioned me thoroughly (as he had already the two girls). This vision, as he named it, interested him deeply. He knew me to be soundly healthy; he had seen the sudden genuine fear holding and altering me as an illness would, and now,

as suddenly and completely as a northwest wind clears the air and leaves it fresh, cool and life-giving, this "vision" had swept away all clouds of fear and brought me new life.

We all talked it over with friends, often. There was no way to verify what Mr. Frémont's part had been during those two weeks. We must wait until, his journey over, by summer at the earliest, he should reach San Francisco, and then the only mail was nearly a month, *via* the Isthmus.

But in early April there came to Washington, overland, a Mormon elder, named Babitt, from the settlement of Parowan in (now) South Utah. Mr. Babitt brought us letters from Mr. Frémont written at Parowan, and added many details of personal intelligence.

The winter had been very harsh, and much snow falling drove off the game. Mr. Frémont had in his party but few of his old companions — men whose experience and nerve gave them resource and staying power in emergencies.

The new men became nearly demoralized under the trying ordeal of cold and hunger and were almost given out when after forty days of increasing want they reached this small Mormon settlement. There they were taken care of with a true hospitality and kindness which none of our family ever forget. One good man, Fuller, had died the day before, but they brought him in fastened on a horse, and Christian burial was given him while men and women with true Christian kindness patiently nursed back to life those nearly exhausted.

Most of the party were unwilling to go farther, and remained there, for whites and Indians agreed that no one had ever been heard of again who had tried to cross into California on that line.

As Mr. Frémont persevered, Mr. Babitt aided him in all ways to refit, and cashed his personal draft on a San Francisco bank, a trust never before shown a Gentile by a Mormon.

Now the fact was verified that there had been

a starving time; that it had lasted through January into the next month; that the last fortnight had been desperately, almost fatally exhausting — quite so to poor Fuller.

This fortnight was the period during which I knew of their starving.

The relief came to them when they got into Parowan — the evening of the sixth of February — when I was made to know that also, that same night. Every family took in some of the men, putting them into warm rooms and clean comfortable beds, and kind-faced women gave them reviving food and pitying words. Mr. Frémont's letters could not say enough of the gentle, patient care of these kind women. And of his own "great relief of mind."

After this we heard no more until the twenty-fifth of May when he telegraphed from New York as his steamer got in from Aspinwall, and by set of sun he was again at home.

Soon he was told by my father of what I have been telling you here. His lawyer-habit of

mind had made him minutely verify what we three women had to tell, but there was a point beyond on which the geographer-astronomer-mind fastened — the point of Time.

As nearly as we could settle it, two A. M. was the hour I had the flash of information that all was well again.

The girls had stayed out later than usual as it was an assembly of family friends for a marriage festivity, and the long rough drive over frozen mud of the old Washington streets was necessarily slow. Our old coachman objected to being out after twelve and we saw with a little quake that it was nearly one when they came in.

After that came the undressing, the leisurely hair-brushing, the long gossip over the evening as they took their tea; and this brought it to about two o'clock. Time did not enter much into our former easy-going Southern lives, and we were three young women amused, comfortable — and what did it matter an hour more or less?

After the shock we were too deeply moved to do other than feel. Properly, we should have looked at the clock, made a minute of the facts, signed it, and put it on record. But we did not know about all that, those days.

We only knew it was "nearing one" when the girls came home, "about two" when the fire grew low, and "quite three" when overpowering sleep sent me off to bed.

Next morning when the baggage came, the journal of that time was taken out and we read the entry for the night of their arrival at Parowan, the bringing up of the journal to the latest waking hour being a fixed habit. We read:

"*Parowan, February* 6, 11h 30′ *p. m.*," and the brief record of the arrival, their safety and comfort, and the goodness of every one to them. He had been around to each of his party for a thankful good-night, and had seen them each in warm beds; he wrote of the contrast to the bad days just past and of his own quiet room with its fire of logs and "the big

white bed" waiting him, to which he must go now for he was "fatigued" and it was near midnight.

Then there followed the wish that I could know of this comfort and of his mind at ease.

And, at that moment, I did know.

For the difference of longitude makes Washington two hours and twenty-three minutes later than Parowan, so that $11^h\,30'$ *p. m.* there, would be in Washington $1^h\,53'$ *a. m.*—"about" two o'clock!

. . . . . .

They have here in California, a lovely custom of a Festival of Flowers each year while the wild flowers are in beauty and roses and other planted flowers are literally in countless number and splendor. These flowers that "toil not" yet do noble work, for the annual flower-fêtes have built up Orphan Asylums and Homes for Working Women throughout the State.

In the spring of 1888 we were guests of the beautiful rich town of San José during its flower-

fête. Among the farming people who came into town to wish a kindly welcome to Mr. Frémont was one, gray, weather-beaten, but hale and clear-eyed. Among the roses he stood, observing the General, then said, "I would know you again anywhere, but you would not know me."

But a dawning memory was coming up and the General asked "Was it not in snow-time?" and both said "Parowan."

And so it was — the very man at whose house he had been so hospitably cared for — from whose hearth in Utah had flashed to me in Washington that strange message of peace.

III.

MY GRIZZLY BEAR.

BEAR VALLEY was the name of the busy mining town nearest us on our mining place in the Lower Sierras. It troubled our sense of fitness to call a town a valley, but it was fixed by custom and fitness; for this had been a happy hunting-ground of the grizzlies. Acorns of the long variety, tasting like chestnuts, abounded here as well as the usual smaller varieties, while the rich oily nut of the piñon-pine made their delight. These acorns and piñones were the chief bread-supplies of the Indians also who did not give them up easily, and consequently bear-skeletons and Indian skulls remained to tell the tale to the miners who came in to the rich "diggings" there. American rifles, then the pounding of quartz

mills and strange shrieks of steam engines drove them away, and only the name remained.

To my objection of using "valley" and "town" as one and the same, I was told best let it alone or worse would follow, for there was a strong party intending to change the name of the place to "Simpkinsville," and how would I like that? The postmaster was the Simpkins —a tall, "showy" young man with an ambitious wife much older than himself; he was a London footman and she Irish, active, energetic, with a good head, and with ambitions for her Simpkins. That neither of them could read or write was a trivial detail that did not seem to disturb the public. Men would swing down from horse or wagon-box, go in and select from the loose pile of letters their own and those of their neighbors, and have their drink at the bar over which Simpkins presided (they kept a tavern and the post-office was only a little detail).

But with the instinct of a man who "had seen the world" toward people of somewhat the

same experience, the postmaster treated us with the largest courtesy, for everything with a capital "F" on it was laid aside for us.* Isaac, our part-Indian hunter, who generally rode in for the mail did not read either, and often had to make return-trips to give back what was not ours. It was in the time of Mr. Buchanan's administration, and had Simpkins sent in a petition signed as it would have been by the *habitués* of his bar, of course so faithful a political servant would have been granted this small favor, of change of name. You may be sure I lay low in my valley to avert this cruel address on my letters.

I had never before gone up to this property, and now it was chiefly as a summer open-air and camping-out tour to be over in three months, when we were to return to Paris where all arrangements had been made for a three-years stay.

* This "F" was the brand on all the tools and belongings of the works — in these countries whatever else was defied the brand had to be respected.

Although the bear had long disappeared from this favorite old haunt I felt nervous about horseback excursions. Mountains are grim things at best, but all those deep clefts and thickets in ravines and horrid stony hill-slopes barred me from any but the beaten stage and wagon-roads, with our cool, brave Isaac to drive me. However, there was one view Mr. Frémont wanted me to see which we could get to only on horseback, with a short climb at the peak of the mountain. From the summit we could see eighty miles off the line of the San Joaquin River, defined by its broad belt of trees, running north and south parallel to our mountains; connecting the two were many mountain rivers crossing the broad plain and glittering like steel ribbons in the afternoon sun — the Merced, the Stanislaus, the Tuolumne and others; a turn of the head showed the peaks of the Yosemite thirty miles off, and lines of blue mountains back to the everlasting snow of Carson's Peak —a stretch of a hundred and fifty miles.

It was a rough ride up, and rougher climbing after the horses could go no further and had to be left tied to trees with one man to watch them — only one other was with us; our party was only myself and my daughter with her father and the two men.

We were growing more and more enthusiastic as glimpses of this rare view came to us. Mr. Frémont told us the distances, which only singularly pure mountain air could have let the eye pierce. "And the ear, too," I said. "We must be three miles from the village and yet how near sounds the barking of that dog!"

Dead silence fell on our animated people. They listened, as the rough, low bark — broader and rougher even than that of a bull-dog — rose again, sounding really close to us.

I never question any acts of some few people but I was surprised, and not too pleased, to find myself hurried back down the steep, stony peak with only, "It is too late to finish the climb — we must hurry — do not speak — keep all your

breath for walking." And hurry we did. I was fairly lifted along. Mr. Burke had disappeared and was now with Lee bringing the horses to meet us — the horses refractory.

Without a word I was lifted into the saddle — Mr. Frémont gathered up my reins himself and kept close to my side — and we fairly scurried down the mountain, I shamelessly holding to the saddle as the steep grade made me dizzy. This dizziness so preoccupied me with the fear of fainting that I felt nothing else. We gained the stage-road by the shortest cut, and then a loping gallop soon brought us home, where I was carefully lifted down and all the consideration and care which they dared not give me on the hurried ride was now lavished on me. I had been seriously ill not long before and could not understand why I was so roughly hauled along.

There was reason enough.

It was no dog, but a grizzly bear that made that warning bark, and we were very close to it.

My ignorance spared me the shock of this

knowledge, but the practised mountain men knew it was not only a bear, but a she-bear with cubs. They knew she would not be likely to leave her cubs at that hour when they were settling for the night unless we came nearer or irritated her by talking and noises. Horses are terribly afraid of this powerful and dangerous animal, and one danger was that our horses would break away and run for safety leaving us to the chances of getting off on foot. There I was the weak link in the chain. My daughter was fleet of foot and so steady of nerve that she was told the truth at once, and did her part bravely in keeping me unaware of any unusual condition. Fortunately our riding horses were, each, pets and friends, and only required to be safe with their masters; Burke had got back instantly to help Lee, and once mounted we were moved by one intelligence, one will.

Very quickly our bright drawing-room filled with eager men gun in hand. Armed men rode down the glen intent on that bear — first coming

to get all information of the exact locality, then to ride and raise the countryside for a general turnout against it. For every one had kept from "the Madam" the fact that a she-bear had been prowling about for some time seeking what she could devour; and that she had devoured some and mangled more of "Quigley's hogs" — Quigley having very fine and profitable hogs at a small ranch three miles from us.

Lights frighten off wild beasts. I had no shame in illuminating the house that night. Men laughed kindly over it, but they all felt glad I had come off so safely, and next day I was early informed that the cubs were all killed. The bear went as usual to Quigley's for her raw pork supper, the digestion of a bear making this a pleasure without drawback, but the stir about the place was evident to the keen senses of the grizzly and the men watched that night in vain. Her tracks were plain all around about, and the poor thing was tracked to her return to her cubs. She had moved them —

made sure they were all dead, and her instinct sent her off into close hiding.

The watch was kept up, but she was wary and kept away.

At length one dark night the Quigley people heard sounds they were sure came from the bear though the hogs in the big pen were quiet. They were stifled sounds blown away by a high wind. There was but one man in the house, and he said his wife would not let him go after them; it was so desperately dark the odds would be all against him.

The woman said she was not sure it was a bear. She half thought it was men fighting, an equally great danger in that isolated way of living. So they shut their ears and their hearts although human groans and stifled blown-away cries made them sure it was no animal.

The sounds passed on. In the morning they went to the wagon-road which ran near their inclosure and found a trail of blood. Followed up it led to a little creek close by with steep

clay banks. Dead, his face downward in the water, lay a young man in a pool of blood — shockingly mangled across the lower part of the body. His sufferings must have been great, but his will and courage had proved greater.

He had not been torn by a bear as was first thought, but by a ball from his own pistol. This was found, a perfectly new pistol, in his trousers pocket ; the scorched clothing showing it had gone off while in the pocket. The trail was followed back, leading to a brook where he must have stooped to drink when the pistol, carrying a heavy ball, went off. Yet such was his courage and determination that he crawled that long way in a state plainly told by the places where he had rolled in agony — the last was where he made his vain appeal for help at the Quigley house. Perhaps he fell face downward into the shallow stream and was mercifully drowned.

His good clothing, a geologist's hammer, and some specimens of quartz wrapped in bits of a

German newspaper, told of an educated, worthy sort of man. But there was nothing to identify him, and the poor fellow was never inquired after. One of the many who came from afar with high hope, and whose life was summed up in that most pathetic of words, "Missing."

The grizzly had disappeared and was, I am told, the last ever known in that valley, which still has as postmark for the town, "Bear Valley;" it is to be presumed the succeeding postmasters have been men who knew the whole of the alphabet as well as the letter "F."

IV.

BESIEGED.

"COLONEL, the Hornitas League has jumped the Black Drift!"

"What does that mean?" I asked.

"Only mining work," was the answer. "You had best go to sleep again."

And in my blissful ignorance go to sleep I did. It was in the hot summer weather, that furnace-like heat of the dry season in a deep valley of the Sierras where the only touch of cooler air comes after the night has shaded the heated earth; and it was in the dim dawn of this fresher hour that the cautious, low-spoken call was made to "the Colonel." *

* Richard Dana of *Two Years Before the Mast* made us a delightful visit in our mountains. He told us that while every man he met was *a* colonel who was not a judge, yet from Stockton up "*the* Colonel" meant Mr. Frémont — hence the localism repeated here.

As Mr. Frémont often rode to the mines, three miles away, before the sun was over the range, it was no surprise to find on waking that he had had his coffee and gone. How early I was not told; nor was I let to know anything of the danger that was calling out the best thinking and best action of all our people.

In my ignorance, we went about our day as usual. We could drive out quite late after the sun was well behind the western range, but all the long day we had to find in-door resources. This was to the advantage of the young people, for we had found some regular occupation necessary and made it of what was around us. Our agent had left an unusually good collection of books (he had recently died) and though it was a very irregular course, yet we secured a lot of amusement as well as instruction from these. In French there were several fine histories of France illustrated from historical portraits and pictures, and good memoirs on the French Revolution. Both the young people

knew Paris well and we could locate events in palaces and parks and streets they were familiar with. A superb Shakespeare, also illustrated, gave more than enough for English study, but there were also many of the English classics, and, what fascinated us, works on medical jurisprudence, and selected cases of circumstantial evidence. From these I would read ahead — I being pilot-engine for my young train — and put limits for their reading on which we would talk together after.

We were only three, but our differing ages and countries made variety in thinking. An English friend had asked us to let his son, a delightful lad of seventeen, go with us for the few months we were to be absent from New York — the boy had outgrown his strength and was ordered travel and rest. My daughter was much younger, but accustomed to grown-up minds, as she had never been sent from home. These two followed eagerly and intelligently my hap-hazard lead and we all found real pleasure

in it. And the tall young Douglass became steadily stronger and more boyish. I felt very responsible for the health of this precious eldest son, and we all grew attached to him for himself. I think a clean-natured, well-bred boy of a happy affectionate nature is a charming associate. All the more if he is, as a boy should be, full of healthy, bold explosive life.

This day we settled to our talk-lesson, but soon I noticed their hearts were not in it. And at luncheon their wholesome young appetites had failed them. The two little boys were also restless, for "Isaac wouldn't let them go out to play in the barn," and it was not possible for them to play out of doors during the fierce heat of the day.

It does not take long for the mind to group little things into proofs of some larger disturbance. Too soon I had to know that that early morning messenger was a herald of danger—of almost inevitable conflict and loss of life.

It is too long to explain here; but a bad local

decision had lately been made by the State Court which gave to all persons the right to enter and hold any "unoccupied" mining claim or mine. This was so worded (and so intended) that the large body of those who had not bought and regularly worked such property could seize and legally hold the property of those who had, "if unoccupied." All the trouble arose from the construction of that word, "unoccupied." A small miner working alone would go to his dinner, and immediately men watching for the chance would seize and hold against him his lawful property.

These outsiders had organized into a League and were bound to help one another. Property-holders, surprised by such a construction, were not ready on their side with organized resistance. And the chief Judge* was openly in sympathy with this League.

Now Americans much prefer to live peaceably, but they will not give up their rights. If it comes to trying force you know their record

* Judge Terry.

as a fighting nation is made. Consequently in a brief time there were over fifty cases entered for trial where men had been killed or had to kill others in defense of their rights.

We had in California at that time a bad element of foreigners. It was believed the English authorities over the convict settlements of Australia did not "take notice" of the shiploads of escaping convicts crowding into California.

We had enough bad Americans, but they, being American, had not that long inheritance of want and crime known to older countries. These criminal outcasts, exulting in their escape from Botany Bay and Sydney, finding themselves in such thinly scattered and far-apart settlements without any visible officers of the law, felt free to follow every bad impulse. Many honest but misled men were at first in this League, men who believed all the lands free because we had bought the country and they were told Mexican titles were of no value and only actual settlers could hold lands and mines. To this ignorant

though honest body came the element which only cared for this legalized chance at plunder. The Arabs say "A court of law is not a court of justice:" justice would settle this question properly, but the letter of this law was against justice.

On our place was a fairly orderly industrious and prospering people in settlements of small towns and mining camps scattered over a dozen miles of mountain country, isolated in sudden emergencies. And our nearest large town and first telegraph was eighty miles away, at Stockton on the Bay of San Francisco.

The invading party numbered over a hundred. They came from Hornitas, a place of evil fame just below our mountains — a gambling nest such as Bret Harte tells of — a place "where everything that loathes the law" found congenial soil and flourished.

These men announced we should get no help from outside, for they would let no messenger go through; they had guarded every ford and

pass, and had their marksmen-watchmen out everywhere. Our local sheriff actually declined to call out a posse. "No use," he said; for the "Hornitas crowd" were the terror of our neighborhood. They had bribed the night watchman to leave free to them these mines; a group of three close together on a high spur of the mountains, which then had been carefully worked for four years, chiefly by experienced Cornish miners brought over by the Colonel.

You must know it is very dangerous to displace the "shoring" — the timbers that protect sides and roof of the long tunnels — but the Hornitas men cared nothing for the future of the mine; no picks and slow work for them. They put in shallow blasts wherever gold showed and were already ravaging the Black Drift.

In the two other mines luckily six of our men had been still at work, so that the League could not enter them even under its own unjust law. This angered them, and they determined to starve these miners out and so compel the

"unoccupied" state they required in order to take possession.

Remember that this property had been bought, paid for, and worked for years under a United States patent.

These three mines opened out high up the precipitous mountain-side, close together, on a small space leveled out to receive the "dump" and allow the ox-wagons to load and turn easily; they were reached only by one road (with a few turn-outs) cut into the face of the mountain. Sixteen hundred feet below was a ravine opening to the Merced River where were the mills with water-power. The opposite mountain rose so near and so high that it was always dark down below in the deep, deep ravine with its jagged walls of rocks and stunted shrubs. Its appropriate name was Hell's Hollow. A fall into it was death. Bad ground for a fight, you see.

Yet on this confined space were gathered the men of the League; and for our side, only the Colonel and a few of our friends. Knowing

how easily a word can kindle into wrath ill-meaning and unreasoning people he preferred to be almost alone. It was hard to hear the shouts and blasts in the Black Drift and know the good work of years was being endangered; but to-morrows did not exist for the spoilers, and the day was theirs. The League, baffled by the fact of six men in the other two mines (which connected) gave answering shouts, and swore they would starve out our faithful men who steadily refused to surrender the mines.

The captain of the miners was one of the six, an excellent quiet American who had a slim little bright wife from Virginia and a brood of small children who played like chamois on the sharp mountain back of their cottage near the mines. This little woman bore the waiting and the threats quietly and bravely; doing her part to "help the Colonel."

Above all Mr. Frémont wished to prevent violence — the first shot would have brought out all the delayed evil of one side, all the

restrained indignation of the other. Once begun it would have been a deadly contest — not only at the mines, but followed up wherever there was plunder to find or a friend to be avenged.

He hoped that by quietly talking with them, by keeping off new sources of dispute, above all by keeping away drink from them they would, as there were Americans among them, come to a better mind and see violence would not ultimately profit them. Our men who had rapidly held a council with him (while I was asleep!) saw this necessity for silence and forbearance and seconded him in every way. They guarded the road and the only path anything but a goat could move on, leading along from the village to the mines; the enemy had cut off communication from the mines, and our men claimed it fair play to cut off communication to the mines. So the danger from whiskey was kept back, in spite of various efforts to get it through.

An express through to Stockton to rouse good friends there to telegraph to the Governor for

State aid, as the sheriff refused to do his duty, had been immediately attempted and as immediately stopped by the guards of the League. They on their side were prepared for all moves. As the Colonel had to be with his men at the mines, and no communication was allowed between them and the village or the steam-mill, he had to leave this and all else to the care of those managing the works — chiefly two very unusually well-qualified men, the book-keeper being one; a man whose silence was as proverbial as his cool courage and high honor. He was to keep a lookout for us also.

Our two brave, faithful colored men, Isaac and Lee, were our guard — this duty the Colonel trusted to them — and as strange horsemen were riding all around firing off pistols, the little boys too were not to leave the house. This arranged rapidly, in the early dawn — while I slept — he was off to the mines.

When a danger is safely over only those who wore through its agony of suspense can realize

what vague horrors beset the mind. The year before I had been in Paris during the time of the Indian mutiny; its hideous facts filled the public papers, and we had some English friends in such distress as can never be forgotten. In this League were some elements as evil and cruel as the Sepoys. Our men had been ordered what to do for us if, as was threatened, the house was burned and ourselves attacked. Death from a friendly hand was more kind than chances among such wild beasts as bad men become when intoxicated.

It seemed unreal — impossible, that in my own country, in the State for which my father and my husband had done so much, on our own ground and in our own home I and my young children should have to face such a condition. And have to bear it all so helplessly; without knowledge even of what was going on but three miles from us. The only certainties to give comfort were that no firing had been heard, and no whiskey allowed to get through.

Towards evening the policy of moderation and patience began to tell. Standing under a sun of over a hundred degrees, with no space to move about and no food to eat, had tamed the enemy into offering a truce for the night. Doubts and disagreements were at work among them. The better men would not join in violence, without which they now saw they could not carry out their plan of holding these mines. They proposed to "sleep on it" and begin afresh next day, demanding everything should remain as they left it.

But little Mrs. Caton rose against this. She said her husband should have food. She made her way through the packed crowd, a little creature but a great heart, carrying a big basket of provisions and — a revolver. Her finger was on the trigger as she pushed forward.

"I shoot the first man that hinders me. You wouldn't like to be shot by a woman! But I'll shoot to kill. You've just got to let me carry his supper in to Caton. You have your quarrel

with the Colonel about mines and lands and you can fight that out with him. But I'm a poor woman that's got only my husband — and five children for him to work for. You sha'n't take his life for your quarrels! He's only doing his duty. He's been cap'n of these mines four years and he'll stand by them till the Colonel orders him out. And I stand by Caton. So let me pass."

And with her uplifted revolver waving like a fan towards one and then another, they fell back and let her enter the mine — some laughing, some praising her, some swearing at her. She carried not only food but ammunition; and three revolvers hung from her waist under her skirts. She "stood by Caton." Then the League set their watch at the mouths of the mines and returned to the village for the night.

The rush of relief at seeing the Colonel made me realize what I had been fearing — and it was all to begin again with morning!

He had to stand by his men on the spot. He felt it already a victory to have warded off action by discussion, to have carried them through a day without violence and without drinking. All we could do was not to distress him by showing our fears but to help him to go, quietly, and refreshed by sleep and home, to another day of chances. Then to wait — to wait with a brain growing hot and benumbed with one fixed terror!

If only we could get word to the Governor.

But our expresses had all been turned back and warned that any fresh attempt would be met by a rifle ball.

Then I was told what my two young people had done.

They had had many climbing walks up the mountain back of our house — many rides all about the country-side and with good glasses had studied out future rides on the eastern face of the mountain, from whose uppermost narrow level the Yosemite Falls showed glittering and seemed near, though thirty miles dis-

tant. They knew dry creek beds and thickets of manzanita and chapparal which would effectually hide a horse carefully led up to and across the summit — then the rider could mount and make as good time as night and rough, unknown, untracked mountains allowed, down to the Merced River — following the river about eight miles up to a large mining camp where Isaac knew the miners — he had hunted and "prospected" all around about us for many years, and with Isaac's name as voucher and passport, there were men there who "would see him through" to Coulterville ; Coulterville being a town and mining settlement about twenty miles to the northeast, and of a steady, law-abiding character.

Douglass had been refused permission to go in the early dawn with the Colonel — his friend's son must not be risked — but stay inactive he could not while danger pressed on us, and so the two thought up this move to the northeast while all the watching was directed west and

south. With Isaac abetting, the best route had been studied out, and as dusk fell the dear boy had got off, leading my daughter's sure-footed mountain-bred mare "Ayah."* He was already far when the Colonel got home. I had not been told, for I could not have consented.

But we both felt deeply his devotion to us.

And it was another strength for Mr. Frémont to hope that by way of Coulterville a messenger could get off without suspicion; a day's hard riding to Stockton "eighty miles away"; the brief delay for the Governor's answer — then the swift ride back with announcement of his support. Fresh horses everywhere were only a matter of money; all lay in the success of the first messenger getting away from our place and the besieging League.

The safe hours of kindly night went all too fast. With the rising of the sun we were again left to watch and fear; with now the added anxiety for Douglass.

* The Hindoo name for bearer or nurse; *Little Henry and his Bearer* was a Sunday school classic in old days.

From one window was a long stretch of view, past the steam-mill and up the mountain-side to where a sharp bend in the road from the mines was clearly defined, its yellowish level and the side-cut glaring out in the hot sunshine. Often, at the usual hour for the return from the mines, the little boys vied in watching that point where just one flash of the swift horse showed black against the sunset sky, and the level tawny road then was lost in the chapparal, hiding the descent into the valley; "Father's coming! I saw him first!" was the glad cry.

Now, at this window, with sight and feeling concentrated on this bend of the road, I stayed while the dreadful time moved slowly on. Isaac permitted my little men to comfort themselves by climbing into a thick-leaved oak, where they obeyed the order for silence — the hush of dread was on us all.

While we watched the mountain-road a new danger came up from the village.

A note was brought from there by a man

Isaac knew to be a friend — no other would have ventured into our inclosure while he and his dog "Rowdy" kept watch and ward — and with the note was a verbal message that "the answer must be at Bates Tavern by sundown."

It was addressed to me, and informed me that at a meeting held at Bates Tavern the night before it had been "Resolved" that I should be allowed twenty-four hours to leave the place — that an escort would see me across the mountain down to the plain — that no harm should be done to us and that I could take my children and my clothes. But that if I was not gone within the twenty-four hours the house would be burned and I must "take the consequences."

This was signed: "For all prisnt"

"Denis O'Brien,

Presdint."

Even in the first moment I felt pleased it was not an American name signing this document.

"They mean mischief," Isaac said. "They

want to entice the Colonel away from the mines."

He was sorely angered and troubled. His Indian blood boiled for revengeful action, but Indian tactics made him submit — apparently — for we were at a woful disadvantage. Myself and my young daughter, two little boys and the two good women who had come with us from home, with only Isaac and Lee and the dogs for guard; that was the whole garrison. That revenge would be sure and wide-spread was a comfort to Isaac — but revenge cannot restore.

Isaac learned there had been decided opposition to this move against the family, but the better men had gone to the mines.

Mr. O'Brien, President, and his faction remained at the tavern, and if they should grow wild from drinking the lookout for us was bad. The near chance of meeting a grizzly bear had unnerved me, but a wild animal is a simple danger compared with the complicated horrors of

a man brought down to animal nature and made furious by drink.

To gain time I sent word that an answer would be given them.

Then, back to my watch.

At least the brain had been stirred, and a tide of anger had displaced the benumbing fear.

And later in the day, not from mountain or village, but from the Indian encampment back of us in the hills came our dear English boy, looking fresh and leisurely as though just in from the usual ride.

"Douglax! Douglax!" shouted the boys (what does not the small boy see!) as they caught the first glimpse of his white turbaned head. An East Indian muslin "puggaree" wound round his hat had been agreed on as the signal of victory — and he sang out a cheery "all right!" as tired "Ayah" made for her stable.

Then, horse and man refreshed, we had details; the main facts of safety and success were so good we made him wait until he had eaten.

Then, Isaac in the doorway, his gun between his knees and his dog at his feet, and Lee beside him, with the little boys and the good women listening, and his fellow-plotter serenely enjoying their success, we all heard his report.

He had started as soon as dusk set in, Isaac's directions and the stars guiding, following up the ravine where overhanging bushes hid "Ayah" as she very unwillingly was led up the mountain at her regular time for rest. After the crest was turned he could mount; then along shelving slopes with steep descents, to the river; keeping to it as well as giant bowlders and steep, projecting spurs of hills with rolling-stone-faces allowed, he came, towards midnight, to the bend and little meadow where cabins and tents and a smouldering fire showed he had reached the camp, which roused at the sound of his approach; but Isaac's name was the countersign and brought out the friend asked for. Instantly the news was given it was met by heartiest sympathy and action. Only the

brief halt to saddle up, to offer the unfailing coffee, and he was off again ; this time cheered by friendly companionship, and sure to lose no time as the way was well known to his comrade. This miner knew who to go to ; and quickly two swift riders were off on their eighty-mile stretch — eighty miles of open plain but cut by deep rivers only one of which had a bridge, the rest only rope ferries. At these there was the risk of men watching on the side of the League.

Bret Harte has peopled this country with creations "founded on fact," doubtless — men with "a single virtue and a thousand faults" (fault is good), but to me the ferries of the Stanislaus and the Tuolumne, the lonely mining camp of the Merced and the remote mining towns tell a better story ; of patient courage in work, and a brotherhood for maintaining order and the law — quick as the minute-men of our Revolution in united support of the right, and with a largeness of good-humored generosity special to our far-West life.

Coultervile had this stamp. They had lately raised there and equipped a uniformed Home Guard, to prevent disturbances and maintain order, and this body volunteered to march over at once, taking the nearer stage-road.

Before sunset they would be on the ground at the mines. By sunset our express to Stockton would be there; the telegrams to and from the Governor sent and answered; and return messengers would ride through the night so that another day would open upon the arm of the law outstretched in protection over our far-away mountain home.

Our book-keeper had given Douglass blank orders for all outlays throughout — but all would have gone well even without this, for everywhere we had struck the right kind of men — "the true vein." Men, who at every risk and sacrifice, in those early days built what was best in Americans into the very foundations of this empire of California; not amusing to read of as the Bret Harte characters, but the men who

had home traditions and guarded them, and handed them down broader and stronger from fiery trials.

How we watched now for that horse at the turn of the road! How glad came the shout from the oak-tree — how blushing, yet proud and glad, was that refined English lad as we made him tell, himself, the modest brief story of his night ride, alone, with the stars for guide — how our chief relaxed into himself in this atmosphere of home love and support — all was good, too good for words to tell.

"They also serve who wait." The difficult waiting was almost over and still violence was kept at bay. Now, the glad news that our expresses had gone through and were already on the return was spread abroad. It was the best — the only answer to Mr. O'Brien. During the night we heard angry voices of horsemen riding around, firing pistols, and otherwise exhaling disappointment and defiance. But our tired chief slept, and so did Douglass; while Isaac

lying on the gallery by my window would say to me in his low cautious voice : " Don't you mind 'em — they're mad — but they're afraid of us now — we are bound to win now."

As we did. The better men refused to act longer with the disorder-loving faction.

" When I go gunning next time I'll make sure first if we are after wild-duck or tame-duck," said an Arkansas man noted and feared as a reckless leader; he came to say to the Colonel that as he saw they were in the wrong, he wanted to stay on the place and would do hauling of quartz, " and help put down that Hornitas crowd if they stay fooling around where they've no business." This alliance was a great gain, and as effective in its way as the arrival of the fine Coulterville Guard.

Soon came the expresses, tired but triumphant. The Governor had telegraphed that the Marshal of the State would start immediately with a force of five hundred men. That, if needed, he would come up himself, with all

force required to restore and maintain order. "Nye of Stockton" — Nye, whose great establishments of wagons and mules, and teamsters who could defend their convoys as well as drive their twelve and twenty-mule teams, made the transportation before railroads — Nye was directed to send up the arms and ammunition post-haste, and the troops the same. And behold our peaceful valley traversed by "prairie-schooners" filled with fighting men and munitions of war — all concentrating on our twelve-acre inclosure whose grass was sadly cut up thereby.

We had put up a big barn and a store-room my French cook always called "*le grocerie.*" Supplies for months, and for undefined numbers of friendly visitors, were the necessity up there. These barrels and sacks and many tins and much glass were now piled on planks laid across barrels under the shade of oaks and giant pines (black pepper by the quart scattered on the planks to head off the ants). Our long French trunks and boxes of delicate clothing (the

" clothes " I was to have safe with my children !) were just stacked under trees ; the arms and ammunition were the precious things now, and had the best accommodation, while their guard bivouacked around and found the big hay loft not a bad sleeping place — three years later how many a cherished son and husband would have been thankful for such quarters !

Of course there were lingering threats and more or less disorder, but it retreated into more congenial quarters. And in a brief time all was again safely back in smooth working order ; even the Black Drift. For of what use was the mine when they could not carry off or crush the ore ? Not at our mills — nor in our wagons — nor on the long private road belonging with the works. So the trouble all vanished like a bad dream. But it had developed far more good than evil ; and organized the good against the evil.

The heat and the nervous strain had told against me and as Mr. Frémont had to go to

San Francisco on business he took us all with him. A friend "going East" left us his house with its beautiful gardens and grounds, and in that reviving sea air and with "nothing to make me afraid" I ought to have got well. Instead of that I slipped into a nervous fever — a horrid blur of bad men shooting — of the children stolen — of a riderless horse tearing round the bend and bolting into the stable, and all such horrors. Poor Douglass came in to say good-by when his steamer was to leave and I could only connect it with his ride for the relief and forbid his going. He was a distinguished and important man when I saw him next, at his own charming country house in England, with wife and children about him.

As everything ends — "*tout passe*" — I got well, and refused out-and-out to stay in San Francisco. As we had to remain until the unjust law was repealed,* and that would require a year, I went back to the mountains "to stand by Caton."

* By Judge Stephen Field.

To wind up more fully, the year brought round poetical justice; for the judge whose known prejudices caused the expression of this "law" caused also his own downfall by an act of violence. "Hoist by his own petard" he had to fly for life from outraged public feeling. The new election gave us a judge who respected justice as well as law.

All the same our three-months summer tour had to stretch into two-years residence; in a country more remote, more isolated, more without any resources familiar to me than I should have chosen, but for all that full of interest and lasting usefulness, and teaching me effectually what one can do, and what one can do without.

V.

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT.

NOW that we were to make a long stay the cottage that had served well enough for a few summer months seemed too cramped for winter quarters. Two boys driven in by stress of weather use up space. "You can calculate to a fraction the displacement caused by a man-of-war, but there is no calculating the displacement caused by a baby."

Just how, or why, small boys fill up and overflow usual spaces I do not know; I only know they do. And I know that it is a sad time when they grow up and leave only silence and order in the empty home.

It was planned we should stay on in the charming San Francisco house with its gardens and views of the bay while a "suitable" house

was built on the mining place, quickly; everything was done quickly out there.

The local idea of the "suitable" house was the horrid Philistine brick two-story concern out of all harmony with the grand and rugged scenery, the great masses of gray rock and the noble pines and oaks — its pert snug petty-suburb effect would have offended and depressed me.

The Colonel understood this and let me have my own idea, which was to be a surprise for them all, for I was to go up ahead and have everything ready for their coming for Christmas.

The bad decision of the State Court kept every mine-owner in the position of a sentinel, for though the first confusion and violence had been sternly met and put down yet in many vexatious law proceedings both troublesome and expensive to meet, the League continued to harass and hinder peaceful occupation. This made necessary frequent going to and fro between our county court and that in San Francisco, and I took advantage of a coming absence of this

kind to carry out my surprise. That I had only a clear two weeks did not matter in that energetic young community, where I was no longer a stranger and outsider, for a danger shared in common makes a bond unknown to easy living.

All my plans were ready and fully thought out in detail. I had the experienced aid of the silent book-keeper, the only one to whom I told my idea — the Colonel was content to accept whatever my surprise should prove to be, only asking a certain limit to be observed, to which the book-keeper and myself gravely answered that the thousands named would be enough, and as soon as he drove away we all went to work.

The agent had some years before built a roomy one-story cottage and fenced in about twelve acres, an expensive luxury where labor and lumber were both so costly. But the result was lovely park-like grounds where the protected grass and wild flowers were in beauty and perfection, and where well-laid-out paths and a carriage-drive looked orderly, and kept order.

Fine use had been made of natural clumps of flowering shrubs and these gave a look of long cultivation to the grounds. The noble evergreen oaks and towering huge pines needed no care of man to make them beautiful. Also there was a fine garden; and everywhere, in the garden, on sunny slopes, and all around the cottage was the beautiful pink rose of Castile. This sweet rose was planted everywhere in old California and grew larger and more fragrant than I had ever known it, even in old gardens in Virginia where it was always profusely grown for the rose-water every good housekeeper made at home.

My idea was to bring together and add to the cottage several large detached buildings of one room each which were in our inclosure; rooms needed for the agency, well built and little used.

By careful management of the ox-teams these could be moved on rollers (the smooth logs were ready and waiting) without sacrificing the beautiful grass and millions of wild flowers just coming up with the rains. The roofs could be kept to

one level and a step or two, up or down, would connect the floors, while the whole should be completed by a very broad veranda, connecting all, on two sides. In the dry season this would be a summer parlor with matting laid down and cane furniture and hammocks, green Venetian blinds inclosing the whole. Altogether, the low-lying wide-spreading cottage would have the look and the comfortable uses of the bungalow of India. It would be a form of shelter tent in keeping with trees and rocks and mountains.

The silent book-keeper had picked his men, and they were ready; the steady grizzled man from Maine who with his sons had the hauling of wood for the mills — his long gray beard and bunchy clothes making him look like Kriss Kringle as he walked by the oxen of his long team; the capable carpenter directing the placing of all the planks and shingles where they should not break the edges of the drive or hurt the grass; the men who sewed sacks for the ores on hand to make the new carpets and curtains.

I had had all measures taken, and bought in one of our own towns on the place all that was needed. The prosperous miner loves an occasional plunge into luxury and nothing is too good for him; hence the stores in mining towns are curiously supplied with beautiful things and luxuries of all kinds. I had found there fine French wall-papers, fine carpeting and rugs, and rolls of woollen and silk curtain-stuffs. The dining-room was made the work-room where I directed, and cheerful, pleased men helped willingly "to get the Madam's Christmas-box ready."

Indoors and out it was all activity and gayety. I had brought up only one small boy, the eldest, whose positive genius for getting into accidents made it best to keep him near me (and I liked to have him). It was a good sight to see his wild joy over the traveling house (*une maison qui voyage!*) with its long team of docile oxen minding the *gee-haws!* and *wo-ahs!* of Kriss Kingle as surely as a cat-boat minds her helm

in the hands of a good sailor. And his pride was immense at knowing what not papa, not any of the family, were to know until *le fête de noel*, when he was to say "This is the House that JACK built!"

We two did the errands — with the best planning something gets forgotten. Early in the cool December mornings we would go off to the largest town, twelve mountain-miles away, in a strong light carriage, Isaac giving a last look to his revolvers as he put one on, and the other under the cushion beside him.

My shopping was varied. The large supplies were on their way up, but meantime the book-keeper sent a list one morning in which steel bars to sharpen picks and a keg of gunpowder had part; myself I needed more pretty tea-cups and table-glass and some ribbons and colored glazed cambrics and dotted muslin for toilet-tables.

On the way back Isaac spied a hunter coming down a mountain-side with a deer on his back.

Never could he pass that. A fat doe in early winter is the hunter's joy. We waited, and bought half, all the man would sell, and gave him a lift of a few miles, getting in before sunset with all our mixed shopping of venison and ribbons and muslin and steel bars and gunpowder and French china and glassware, with twenty-four miles of mountain air and sunshine to the good of my health.

There was a brick chimney to be built — we had already a large one of stone — and the best bricklayer of the country-side came to put it up. Everything was ready for him as his time also was limited; it was only as a personal favor to me that he came at all from his other work — everybody was nice and helping to me. The foundation had been made ready, and willing hands aided him so the chimney rose steadily from the moment of his coming. He would not come down even to eat, but a hod lined by a napkin carried up all he would take, and when a light rain fell a big umbrella was held over

him to protect, not the bricklayer — he would have scorned that notion — but the cement. The whole new house was cemented by good-will and the desire to give me pleasure.

"No money would ever get such work out of these men," the book-keeper told me.

There was no plastering; the climate did not require it; and canvas well-stretched took papering well; so ceilings were made of it and the wood walls covered by it. A young man who had been scene-painter at the St. Charles theater in New Orleans had skill and great taste and made clever effects with the really fine wall-papers I had found; cream white and gold with deep borders of dull-reds and gold for the large parlor which was to be also dining-room for the winter as it had a fire; pale blue with white roses for my own room, and charming cretonne papers for the others. I had found cretonnes and silk and woollen curtain stuffs beautifully matching all these wall-papers.

We made an imposing, irregular, invaluable

dining-room in walnut and oak papers and there we set up the Tree. First covering the new crimson carpet — the same all over our bungalow — with green baize. "Never mind if the dark carpets will show dust," said my cheerful handmaiden Rose; "it looks so warm and fine to have them all alike, and I'll take care of them." My inexperience had not thought of the dust and foot-mark question, only of the good unity of effect in our irregular rooms thus harmonized. But the best was made of everything by all.

The Tree was the bushy top of a fine long-coned pine. It was another rare joy for the small boy to help choose this and see it cut — see it carefully loaded on to a wood sled and brought into the dining-room to be decorated — to help brush over the long cones with mucilage on which we pressed thin gilt paper, making a cluster of glittering golden cones to each bough. Then it was lifted into place and made firm and secure — a beautiful fragrant glittering tree with the gold star crowning its rich dark green.

There were so many and such varied things to do and see to that it was a pleasant confusion and reminded me of an old fairy tale where the Princess has to marry a little deformed Dwarf — who is however an Enchanter — and is really a beautiful young Prince and is just trying her by his disguise. She walks, crying, in the garden of his palace and suddenly hears sounds from underground — the hurry of preparation for a great wedding feast. What she hears dries her tears, for she finds he is beloved by the fairies who are all helping and praising him, so she is no longer afraid. "Where is the largest cake pan?" she hears; "and the largest egg pan, the one that holds a hundred eggs beaten to a froth? for he shall have the largest cake and the most beautiful ever made."

We had the most beautiful cakes that could be made — though none had a hundred eggs in it. In our village was a thoroughly first-class Vienna baker; the Colonel would not employ men who drank but, knowing good food was

necessary to keep the stomach in order, had brought up this man from San Francisco and given him the custom of the works, as well as our own. This baker entered into the Christmas idea with true South German enthusiasm. It would take a paper to itself to describe the beautiful things he made in cakes and in sugar for the Tree. Never had I seen such. They were the best Vienna ideas "regardless of cost" — which Germans never are. The candles sent up were a failure. They had come through the tropics as all freights did then, and were chippy and flaked off. Nor were they large enough for our beautiful Tree. The baker rose to the emergency. He made handsome tapers of bees-wax and decorated them artistically with colors and gold leaf, like the decorated blessed wax-lights one buys at cathedral doors abroad. Our Tree was now quite beautiful.

Its fruitage was all ready in the big out-door store-room; cases of candied fruits, boxes of toys and games and picture-books, boxes of

colored beads in bunches of strings for our neighbors of the Indian village, pretty brooches and gowns and things for our women who had "come from the States" with us, and gifts for our good Isaac and the few home-people who made our constant life. It was to be a true home-Christmas, not "a party."

While all else was going on the piano had to be tuned. With the family was to come up a very dear friend of mine from New York who was making a short visit to her brother in San Francisco. Her happy temper, her lovely gift of song and sweet ways, made her coming a great Christmas-gift to me. Music was with her a natural expression, but the piano was long unused and wildly out of tune, and the nearest tuner was in Stockton, eighty miles away. Sidney Smith thought he had touched bottom when he was twelve miles away from a lemon—eighty miles divided us from the lemon and many other fruits of civilization.

But we found some new strings and the big

blacksmith of the mills fastened them on, winding them with a winch — very cautiously — until I said "stop;" I tapping along until the sound came right. Manuel, a black man from Virginia, was delighted with this odd exercise of his strength. He also made for me a fine fender of the sieve-iron used to "screen" gold washings, and some stately mediæval-looking firedogs of hammered iron.

The tenth day all was entirely complete and in working order. Fire was lit on the new hearth and no smoking followed; the bricklayer said "it was a good job if it was so hurried."

The walls and ceilings had a look of solid elegance and the unity of effect made by the same red Brussels carpeting everywhere aided the appearance of a large and quiet house. A fresh outer layer of overlapping narrow planks had put a uniform appearance over all the outside of the house and the painters followed up closely the men nailing up the boards. It was "a quick job" all round.

But my chief pride was in the windows. Only the common small-paned sashes were to be had ready made. I bethought myself of old English engravings, and by putting these small windows side by side, as many as a wall would take, we rose from mean commonplace windows to the quaint Queen-Anne effect, and secured a wide look-out to glorious views. Full straight curtains with a deep frill at top framed these by day, and when drawn close at night with woodfire and waxlights, piano and books, there was rest and comfort for a tired wet horseman to find at close of day.

Everything was now in readiness. All traces of work had been carried off, and smooth order and quiet replaced the busy little crowd of the past ten days. There was a smell of paint, and to say the least an odor of much freshness; but good fires counteracted this, and we kept fragrant cedar pastils burning in each one of the rooms. Everywhere were wreaths of ground-pine, with wild-rose-haws on duty for holly berries,

and on our windows was the Christmas Cross. The pretty supper was on the table; its ultra-civilized appointments and the sparkling spun-sugar pyramids and frosted-sugar things and bright jellies were concentrated into a picture by the light from a hanging lamp with its fringed crimson silk shade. All our "helping-hands" had exchanged congratulations and good wishes and good-by, over Christmas cake and tea, and now in the quiet of the beautified home the book-keeper showed me its crowning beauty; that everything — and I had gone ahead without counting — had, as we intended, not cost one fifth of the allotted sum. As Secretary of our Treasury this good showing of much profit from small outlay made him serenely content.

It was the triumph of "making the best of things" we had, and using good taste in place of mere spending. And it broadened the circle of local good feeling to have our own neighborhood furnish all supplies; so we were pleased with our work and ourselves. And now impatient

to see "the Colonel's" pleasure and his astonishment, for

"In such place, 'twas strange to see,"

a home that was full of comfort and

. . . "beautiful exceedingly."

The Christmas-eve closed in dark and misty before our travelers at last arrived. They had been delayed on the mountains by a thick falling mist which obliged them to great caution, for shelving rocks and deep gorges bordered the winding road. Mounted men with torches, and giving cheery hails, had gone far to meet them, and once down into our valley the blaze of lights from our broad Queen Anne windows made a welcoming beacon.

It was a home-coming of delighted surprises — what a happy clamor it was! And my "surprise" was approved and praised to my heart's content.

My New York friend had no words to express

her astonishment and delight — the open piano caught her eye and straightway her splendid voice filled my hungry ears with triumphant song. But hungry people claimed her for supper: "Bouillon, mayonnaise! game pâté! jellies, wedding-cakes, and all Delmonico's!"

The two days travel across solitary plains with frontier stopping-places closing with the risky mountain crossing in the dark made it, as she said, "a transformation-scene" to come out of the night and the mist into this vision of a New York home — enriched by a frontier welcome.

There was but one family of children within miles of us. They were few even in the town and large mining settlements near us; in the village close by I knew of none, but between us and the village was a log-cabin overflowing with them. It stood on a little mound where the waste water from the mill flowed by and might have been made a pretty place.

But no ideas of beauty belonged among its

inmates. The Calhouns were of a kind happily becoming extinct — the "poor whites" of the South. For several years they had lived here and the only growth about them was this swarm of sallow tow-headed children.

They were entirely useless but equally harmless people, neither bad nor good, nor anything. Quite contented in their own way, undisturbed by knowledge of any kind and satisfied with their idle life where a little gold-digging and hunting provided for all they knew of as comforts.

If anything more was wanted they asked for it from those able to give. Her baby was ill and she sent a big boy running for me. "Mam wants you to come right away — the baby's in a fit."

Luckily a hot bath put it right. She was quite silent and impassive as I bathed and rubbed the struggling little thing and only spoke after nausea had relieved it of a long slip of salt pork, and left it again comfortable: "Well, you air smart. Your boys look so hearty I thought you'd know all about fits."

She laughed to scorn my saying a baby not a year old could not manage solid food, and pointed to her little crowd — huddled around us, watching: "They always eat everything I did, coffee and pork and everything, and I never buried one!"

What can one do with such chaos?

These were the only children within reach. Christmas and its meaning was unknown to them, but I went to the cabin and told the mother I wanted them to see the Tree lighted and get from it some presents they would find upon it. She had a dim memory that it was a season of feasting — nothing more — a more complete yet contented blank could hardly be.

Near by was a large Indian village, some hundreds settled there. The young women from it came constantly to our house and sat about on the grass chatting together of us and laughing as they watched our doings with frank curiosity. We were their matinée. Often we stopped at their village on our rides and watched them in turn as we sat on our horses. Their

ways all had object and meaning — the sewing of squirrel skins together, the pounding of acorns into meal for bread, the basket weaving, and they were fairly clean and very gay. It was a pleasure to give them beads and such things as they found good to eat or pretty to wear and now we told them — with some Spanish words they understood, and much pantomime that they must come to see the *festa* of the Tree they had watched being cut and carried to the house; that they must bring baskets to carry home *mucho mucho* — spreading our hands, and filling an imaginary basket full of things to eat, and things to wear. They "caught on" and accepted with many laughs of pleasure.

When I put the Cross in the window soon it drew its little following of girls, and some of the gray-headed women; coming out to them they pointed to it with their long-drawn deep *eh-eh-eh!* and signed themselves on forehead and breast. They had evidently some dim traditional memory from the old Missions and, liking and

trusting us already, we were accepted by them as the same with the missionary priests, for the Cross was to them assurance of protection and good-will — not the usual ill-will of the whites. Poor Mrs. Calhoun had no ideas ; forms of any kind had no part in her life.

It was hard to induce her young ones to come in to the Tree. Its lights shone out through the broadside of window and we saw them clustered outside, like lunar moths, their white heads bobbing about as they ran around in hushed surprise. At last we got them in, hanging together like bees around the tallest boy, silent, but open-mouthed and staring.

All boys fraternize. Mine began giving to these a lot of Nuremberg pine-wood animals, the first of such things ever seen by them.

"A hog," cried out the big boy as he seized the hyena. His eyes glittered as he hugged the bow-backed beast to his bosom, and no other of the gifts so roused him.

They made off early to their "mam" with a

big basket full of toys and sweets, and with many parcels of useful things for her and themselves.

As my youngest boy was but three, it was to him also a first Christmas. He had heard so much of it that his naturally investigating, doubting tone of mind had shaped his own ideas. When all was ready and the candles lighted he was sent alone into the large quiet room where rose the strange Tree covered with gilded cones and candles and glittering fruits and toys. He was quite silent. With his curly head a little to one side and hands locked behind his back he walked around the strange growth; then going to his special ally he put his hand into his father's and said in his French-English "*Koom see. Kreesmas haze koom!*" And forthwith commenced a chatter and thorough investigation as was his wont in their daily walks together.

Our Christmas opened old memories near and far. Some weeks after three women came on horseback from a mining camp deep in the

mountains, a hard day's ride there and back. My Tree had roused home feelings in these isolated women, and the one who could embroider had made me a collar of fine needlework, gratefully received by me for the feeling with which it had been made; while they all wanted to tell me how they felt to hear of a Christmas-tree so near; and to tell me what a difference I had made by staying up during the mining troubles:

"If you had gone away then, the men would have begun fighting and these hills would have run blood. And now we sleep safe over at our camp because the Colonel stands up for stopping the jumping of our mine. And now you have come to stay he'll see us safe through."

They could stay but a few hours, but they did enjoy going over my patch-work house, and appreciated all my arrangements and contrivances. All was as pretty as a picture — and an assurance in widening circles of gentle influences for peace and good-will.

VI.

SIERRA NEIGHBORS.

WE had not easily reached this condition of orderly comfort. Our earlier housekeeping had presented difficulties which would have dismayed regular forces, but we were the kind of volunteers "who did not know when they were beaten." And by keeping on trying against all failures, we won at last, and made the domestic wheels go round with smooth regularity.

Labor was all concentrated into the one channel of mining work, and so long as canned and salted things, easily kept and easy of transportation, suited the miners, no effort was made to give them fresher food. Consequently we found some unusual conditions for housekeeping; fancy going about it with no milk, no eggs — no

hens to lay them — no vegetables. And as there was no ice, the only meat, beef, had to be killed, cooked and used the same day, during summer weather. It was almost the fable of King Midas — gold everywhere, but nothing but gold.

Our garden was run wild except the unfailing cabbage patch. That had been cared for. My friend, Miss Seward, has laughed with me over this inevitable around-the-world vegetable — "we left it in fields on fields in our own Mohawk Valley, and saw it everywhere, even in the Valley of Cachemire"; but

"Thy sweet vale, Cachemire,"

had not sweeter roses than we found taking care of themselves and spreading over the rioting artichokes which claimed their birthright as thistles to possess the land.

Even water, that life-blood of all growths, was hard to get at. Large clear springs were many, welling up from under projecting rocks, but it

was a heart-break and a back-break for the women to dip up enough of this for daily uses.

Perhaps the laundry work was our most serious question; for though the two nurses had taken the kitchen and laundry, the heat made both hard for them at best, and this novel bother about water made it harder.

And no money could prevail on any of the very few women up there to work; they were too much at ease in this prospering mining community to fatigue themselves, which was good for them while it was trying for us. Whatever men could do was quickly accomplished. A big barn and stable, a fine hen-house, a duck-pond, made by leading the water of several springs to a depression and there damming it, quickly gave proper living to our animals and the load of fowls we had sent up from Stockton. But the clothes began to accumulate into an alarming mound.

At last we got a laundress. Hearing of our *carte-blanche* offers, there came a group of a man,

his wife and baby and a pack-horse loaded with their traps. "He" would "let her stay" until she was strong again. Her baby was very young, and she looked, as she said she was, "most beat out."

Thankfully we accepted all demands: a separate lodging, and their separate cooking establishment; provisions for all the party, and feed and pasture for the horse; and a hundred dollars a month in money. As an incident, when her health, her housekeeping and her baby permitted, she was to do the washing.

I had difficulty in suppressing my French nurse, who was fortunately not fluent in English — "*des voleurs!*" was her comment; but it was Hobson's choice.

"He" was a surly creature, holding himself high above our two colored men because he was white; but not above living off his wife's work. She looked timidly at me while the unpleasant young man dictated his terms. Her wistful look and the thin little dirty baby made all of

us women close round her in protection, though the man was repelling. With good rest and nourishing food, and kindly cares from women, she regained strength fast and came so bravely in help to our people that the clothes-mountain diminished rapidly.

But before the month ended, she came to me, crying; "He" said she was well enough to go on, that she could make money now by her washing while he worked in the diggings at Walker's Creek (the last new excitement) and must come then — that day.

We could not help her any further. It had been to her a paradise of friendly helping, of care such as she never dreamed of for her baby as well as for her own young ignorant self, and now she knew the difference, while we hated to see her dragged back into that fagging tramp-life; but he strode off, gun on shoulder, leading the horse, and she trailed after him, head down, carrying the baby.

After this I boldly utilized Indian girls from

their village hard by. We were warned they would carry off anything they fancied, but they never did. Punctuality was not their gift, but good-humor was, and a genuine girlish pleasure in praise and rewards. The silver piece, larger or smaller, according to their merit, which closed the day was a quick education, and we had more candidates than we had places for. A competitive practical testing of steadiness and capacity winnowed out an efficient corps of washerwomen and "scrub-girls."

As water will not run uphill, we built the laundry down the hill, over a spring; lining the spring with smooth planking, and leading its gathered waters by a trough into large tubs, each a grade below the other, the water let on by a plug from above, and off by others in the bottoms of the tubs — the whole running off into a little ravine to the happiness of our ducks and geese. A discarded invention for roasting crushed ore made a capital hot-water boiler, with the advantage of standing outside under a

spreading oak. The spring gave its own freshness to the large laundry-room where, after work had grown to smooth habit in her domain, Rose could sit in comfort at the mending, or reading her beloved "David Copperfield," and govern her dusky crew by a shake of the head and an exhibit of the smallest coin, or an encouraging smile and "*beuno beuno*" with a large coin held up; and a bright ribbon or a string of beads equalled a gold medal as reward. Extra rewards were given for personal neatness — some combs and brushes and much soap, with object-lessons by my tidy sweet-natured Rose.

They looked of a different race after they had seen the advantage of cleanliness, and learned to plait their thick hair in a club. Starch in their own calico skirts was the crowning touch of finery. A clean white under garment, a bright-colored cotton skirt, with a large gay cotton handkerchief pinned across the shoulders, and the tidy club of plaited hair tied with a bright ribbon, made them into picturesque peasants.

I had grown up among slaves and could make allowance for untutored people, as I knew them of all grades, from the carefully trained and refined house-servants to the common field-hands; and knew that with them, as with us, they must have nature's stamp of intelligence and good-humor, without which any teaching and training is not much use. As the early Mission Fathers had taught weaving and cooking to the women, and simple agriculture and the care of flocks and herds to the men, and left in the fine mission buildings proof of their capacity as workmen, so I experimented on these Indian women with advantage to them as well as to ourselves.

And later we had our reward from Indian men also. Often on our rides, as I have said, we would stop in the Indian village and watch them as we sat on our horses. The center of the village was their open-air work room and salon, where they seemed always cheerfully busy and useful — the women, I mean — the men went too much to the whites' village; but

they also went after squirrels and birds and game, and the squirrel-skins made an important feature in their clothing. They sewed these together into large capes; a woman, laughing, held up an unfinished garment huddled across her breast with a pretended shiver as she looked high up the mountain, making us see they were providing against cold weather.

We noticed one very old body, too old to pound acorns or gather sticks — she looked herself like a fagot of dried sticks — who was always peeling mushrooms, or carefully peeling the oily piñon-nut, which they grind and mix with acorn flour into a cake. Her one only garment was a scant and ragged old cloak of squirrel skins that did not meet around her. We carried her and made her put on a woollen undershirt and a warm scarlet balmoral skirt, and shortly after saw this striped skirt worn as a hussar jacket, jauntily, one bare arm and shoulder free, by a young Indian man going into our village. And he only shook his head

and grinned and kept on when I tried to make him ashamed of robbing the old crone. Then I tried Prussian war-tactics and made their whole village responsible — no more presents to any one unless they all joined in keeping for the one we gave to what was his or hers. And it worked about as well as our elaborate methods of securing justice. There is no protection for age and helplessness except among really Christian communities.

Their babies had, I thought, a roughish life. You can't fondle a cradle as well as a baby, and these little ones, tight-swaddled and strapped to flat osier cradles, with a little wicker hood to them, were carried on the mother's back when she went about the country, and just hung up on trees when she was at home. The flies bothered them sadly; they were not clean, but they were stoically quiet — no one ever heard an Indian baby cry.

Some of their baskets they wove so compactly that they were used to boil water in — basket-work

tea-kettles; others, long and wide-mouthed cones with one flat side, were carried on the back by a strap around chest and forehead, and were of the exact shape and uses of the *hotte* of the French peasant. Into these they gathered and carried heavy loads of acorns, of berries and of mushrooms; of these last they used great quantities, both dried and fresh.

People who of their own accord did these things, could do more when instructed, encouraged and rewarded.

The elder women dearly loved their pipes and delighted in the tobacco we carried them; they added it in small proportion to the customary dried leaves and herbs in regular use. Great as was their interest in our visits and though they were sure of beads and tobacco and other treasures from us, yet they never failed in genuine politeness; never crowding, or even looking eager, but gaily welcoming us, and offering us piñon-nuts or whatever berries were in season with native good manners.

It was exactly the Bible picture of the "two women shall be grinding corn," to see them pounding acorns into meal for bread (how they did prize a real sieve), a flat stone with a vigorous woman either side squatted on the ground, lifting her pounding stone with both hands, the arms of the two rising and falling alternately in accurate time and even stroke. The younger women and girls wove baskets, sewed skins and calico skirts and made nets of twine and beads for the men, as well as for their own manes of hair — in their way they were comfortable and industrious and had useful purpose and forethought in their occupations.

Our house, ourselves and our kitchen remained of endless interest to them. They would drop in a ring on the grass near the open door of the kitchen, and follow all Mémé's doings with laughing comments, she with true French good humor indulging them and by lively pantomime explaining — often following up by a portion for them to taste.

Their soft voices would chorus out the "*eh-eh-eh!*" which expressed by its intonation wonder, sorrow or pleasure. Beef-suet was to them what chocolate bonbons are to our girls — they shredded it daintily, laughing with each mouthful. The cook kept it all for them, melted into cakes, and to combine enjoyments they would flock over to the tree under which lessons generally went on, pleased and quiet unless Douglass in a boyish fit of fun recited poetry with gestures, when the "*eh-eh-eh!*" became a chorus of praise — it was a picture, the fair-haired very white English lad reciting the Morte d'Arthur with Indians and mountains for audience and theater.

They quickly saw our love of wild flowers and brought the first of each — even some of their young men brought flowers that grew in difficult places, to the amazement of the white people who met them carrying wild jasmine and larkspur and the tulip-like mariposas-flower to "Flémon" as they named us all. "I'd

never have believed it of an Injun," said one man to me.

Quite our nearest white neighbors, occupying each a small "rise" by which flowed the waste-water of the mill, were on one an Italian with his wife and baby, and on the other the family I have spoken of,— a typical family of a kind now impossible, "the poor whites of the South." Deprived there by surrounding influences of all advantages, of all chances, their whole pride concentrated in the fact that they were white; this, by the curious alchemy of ignorance and self-conceit, endowed them with complacent superiority. The swarthy, black-eyed, black-haired Italians they looked down upon with contempt because they were so dark, and because "that Eye-talian worked like a niggar." He worked a great deal harder. He had put a fence around his few acres, saved some of the fine trees, and was already raising cabbages and beans when I first went up to the place.

His small cabin solidly plastered and white-washed outside and in, with its door, and a glass window with a white curtain, showed their industry and neatness in contrast with the dingy log-cabin and hard bare ground of the next knoll.

The "Eye-talian" had behaved well during the mining trouble; he produced a long gun shaped like a wide-mouthed trumpet and reported for defensive duty at our house or the mill; further he would not go from his wife. Not only for prudent care of her but, he was known to be wildly jealous. She was many years younger than himself, and really beautiful. When I first saw her in her picturesque peasant dress, her own young beauty and the noble baby in her arms made a vision of artistic beauty, and Old World art-associations — a true peasant Madonna and Child. She was never let to leave their little inclosure, but her picture-like beauty attracted me often, and the baby was a little Murillo. Seeing the man so industrious

and capable, I got for him from San Francisco proper implements and seeds of herbs and vegetables and some flowers, and soon he had a market garden that paid him well, and was a great luxury to us.

As for their scornful neighbors, the *Cal*-hoons," my one look in upon them when they called me in to help the baby through "a fit" was enough. Theirs was a hopeless case of contented ignorance of better things. There, where every one was getting rich simply by easy work, they lived for mere existence. Deer and hares and birds they could have in quantity, for hunting was not "work." The father prided himself on *not* working unless when he wanted a little more money than his fitful gold-digging gave him. He had made a short dam and collected the water running by his door, and by its aid could always wash out enough "pay-dirt" for their pork and coffee and tobacco; if he needed more he came to the mill and asked a job of wood-cutting, and always got it; the Colonel

had so ordered for, he said, he "liked a man to be thorough, and Calhoun was the most thoroughly idle man he ever knew."

The climate was easy, and there was no end to the fine fuel to be had for the gathering, and with a little industry he and his boys could have gathered gold as easily; but they toiled not, nor did they care to adorn themselves even with cleanliness, though nature had fairly endowed both man and woman; both were tall, erect, and easy in motion, with good straight features, and large, clear eyes. Yet their small log-cabin had an earth floor; the windows mere gaps left between the mud-chinked walls; the bedstead low stakes with a hide stretched across, and a dreadful-looking feather bed and old quilts made the bed. A wide, yawning rough chimney of stones made a fine fireplace, but furniture there was none beyond some blocks of wood for seats. *On mangeait sur la pouce* evidently, and the "thumb" was not tidied up after meals.

They were utterly without the most simple

instruction, and still this woman had some of the instincts and feminine little arts belonging to high training. Once *Cal*-hoon cut down a large group of fine oaks the Colonel specially protected for their beauty and their position near our village. Returning from San Francisco he found this harm done, and for once was angry; sending for the evil-doer to come to him at the house.

In his place came Mrs. *Cal*-hoon with her following of children. Easy, unconcerned, with quite the manner of any morning visitor of society, she walked in upon me and installed herself in an arm-chair: the Colonel being out she told me I might just go on teaching my little girl — "she liked to hear me"; then tilting back her sunbonnet proceeded to nourish the baby and issue orders to the children who stuck to her: "You jest set down there, and don't scrape your feet ag'in the carpet" (down settled many little boys in high-necked tow trousers, only these and nothing more). "You," to the

bigger boys, "you just go to Uncle Ike" (our Isaac) "and tell him I'll take a settin' o' the white turkey's eggs; he kin put 'em in a basket."

All obeyed her. I went on with the French reading while the cake I had sent for was being quietly eaten by the little ones and the mother, who in one lank garment of calico lay back in the chair and stretched her long limbs, showing brogans without stockings, but as simply content listening to our reading as any lady might listen at a concert.

She did not rise when the Colonel came, for the baby was asleep, but she was so natural and direct, so instinctively sure of disarming displeasure, that she carried the day and left us amused and pleased by her native tact:

"Kurnel, I hearn you was mad at *Cal*-hoon for cuttin' them oaks, and I come over to tell you 'twa'n't him, 'twas *me* did it. You see he'd got a big job o' cuttin' while you was down to 'Frisco ef he could git it done up right away, and *I*" (with a little feminine toss of the head)

"tole him, jest take the little grove on the stage road and you'll haul it in quick — an' he done it because *I* tole him. So it's *me*, Kurnel, you've got to be mad at."

The absurd contradiction between her looks and her falling back on the privileges of an irresponsible fine lady who feels no barrier to her caprices, fetched us; and she went off satisfied with herself, though promising for the future to keep her husband to the trees marked out for cutting.

These were our immediate neighbors. In the large town twelve miles away were, as one is sure to find in our frontier towns, an advance-guard of exceptional men strong in heart and purpose, and some fine, patient, hoping women who tell well in forming the community.

Among these connected with our own works were men of education and travel, and already travelers came up with letters of introduction to visit the mines and works, and from us go on to the Yosemite region near by. In this way

we had a charming visit from Richard Dana — "Two Years Before the Mast" Dana. He and the Colonel met as two Selkirks might, revisiting their once desert island and finding it a busy seaport. And a visit from Horace Greeley who could not sufficiently praise my "executive ability" as he called it — for to him any well-ordered household was the acme of woman's genius, and now after his overland-stage experience he was surprised by this evolution of elegance and comfort in such remote surroundings.

But months of isolation from such women as one needs for human nature's daily food, made the long visit of our friend Hannah beyond telling precious. With her Quaker name and complexion she had their sweet even domestic nature, and a happy overflowing wit and gayety of heart all her own. Like Charles Lamb's Hester,

> "Her parents held the Quaker rule
> Which doth the passions train and cool;
> It could not Hester,

For she was trained in Nature's school
And Nature blest her."

With all, she had the gift of song and a musical organization, which with high training and the best associations in music made of her the most complete, the most enjoyable musical person I have ever known. We had met often in the usual society ways in New York and our mutual love of music brought us together at many intimate musicales, but now in this odd framing her talent came out resplendent. And in all ways it became a friendship for life. The delightful long days in the open air, the charming evenings of music, the appreciative zest with which she entered into the novel interests of the work on the place, were helping and refreshing to the Colonel, while I was in a long good dream of content.

We would make an early start, Hannah driving the light strong mountain-wagon, a man following on horseback in case of need, and go wherever wheels could carry us; making unex-

pected finds of isolated houses or little settlements where we gave a bit of pleasure to some lonely woman and always met the most cordial, real hospitality and welcome. At some places where I saw it would be a joy, I asked Hannah to sing, and never did a glorious gift do more gracious and lovely duty than when she sang to them the songs they knew of, and other music which was a revelation.

We came once on a place that looked as though a woman's care had shaped things; the grass was cut short, and a clean path led up to a wide porch with seats and a table, and the great oaks all around and overhanging the house and corral were very different from the usual stumps which make our national frontier decoration — and behold! there was not a woman around there. Only men — but Frenchmen. And a "hard lot" as we learned afterwards. Isaac, who knew every one, was not with us that day, only a man we had brought up from San Francisco. But the "hard lot" came forward

and offered milk and spring water, or if we would do them the honor to descend they asked to offer us an omelet and some claret — which we had to decline, as it was late and we were nearly fourteen miles from home.

As soon as the snows were enough off we were to go to the Yosemite, only thirty miles away in an air line, but about seventy by the best trail then open. It was to be a horseback camping-out excursion, and very careful and experienced men were selected to go with us and make all safe and comfortable. A pack-mule carried some light baggage, as we were to be away a week.

But when the morning came for the start with it arrived three lawyers to stay a few days on business. This ended my going. It was very hard to lose this delightful bit of travel in such companionship, and not to see the new wonder-land together. But I was needed at home for manners, as well as for housekeeping, good as my women were.

They started without me, all, even my accident-boy; and then later in the day, but quite too late to overtake them, we found I might have gone, after all. For some requirement obliged the case to come up in the San Francisco courts, not, as they expected, in our own county court.

This was a double disappointment, but I had to put myself down and be hospitable and as agreeable as possible; for the lawyers were really sorry about my lost pleasant outing.

They were taking leave to join the stage which passed through our village about sunset, when I felt something was wrong — there were looks of alarm, more people than usual were coming and going — rapidly. Though they tried to engage my attention, I quickly found my youngest boy was missing and no one could find him. The mill, even the village was roused by the alarm, and men on foot and on horseback were searching, but could find no trace. "Lost child" is a note of woe anywhere, but

here in a wild, wild mountain country with brooks and mill-dams and deep mining-holes, so many pit-falls for the baby feet — he was only three years old — and with rattle-snakes in number, the sun sinking and darkness coming fast on the narrow valley — horror seized me.

Singly, then all together, many strong voices called the dear name. Horsemen zigzagged around shouting it — myself, holding on to his father, running to Calhoun's little dam where men tore it down and let out the water. Then we ran away from that terror, again to the mill-road where sometimes he was let to go to meet his father, though never alone — he was so young.

Drowned! — Stolen! — Rushing crowds of terrors pictured themselves to me as I ran over rocks and tree roots, frantic, but dumb. "For Heaven's sake scream or cry or call the boy!" one of the lawyers said to me, seeing I could not speak; in rough kindness he grasped my hands trying to break the silent horror that he saw had mastered me. I saw it growing darker.

There was only left a broad red band of sunset at the far end of the valley.

Then a cry, "Look up!" and with a mighty shout all cried, "There he is!" and against the red bar was outlined a horse with its harness knotted up about it, the teamster holding high in his arms my baby.

For the first and only time in my life I felt that cruel force, that cyclone of the true hysteric passion. For days after my throat and chest remained weak and bruised by the prolonged, repeated wild screams that no reasoning or comforting — not even the little tender arms around me could stop. Then the rough lawyer wet my face and head and tried to make me swallow water — I saw his face and that his eyes were filled with tears. "Let her scream — let her cry — don't you see she was going mad in that silence?"

And then the rain of saving tears came to me. How good the men all were; the kindest gentle words. They carried me to the house,

the baby held fast by me — I was too limp and broken-up to move.

And after all it was the mistaken kindness of a passing teamster who seeing the child perched on a gate-post, offered him a ride, keeping the little fellow after it, while unharnessing his team, and not conscious of anything unusual until the calls of the mounted men reached him, when he jumped on one of the horses and came fast, holding the boy aloft.

This incident and the good personal feeling it drew out bound us all together in a way nothing else could. The protecting instinct is wonderfully strong in American men toward women, children, and those struck by calamity. Now any leaven of hard feelings as to much land to some and little to others was wiped out by the touch of nature which made us all one that brief, but horribly long, time of fear for the lost child. And after that I felt encompassed by the delightful atmosphere of kindly good-will.

VII.

CAMPING NEAR THE GIANT TREES.

BY way of making up to me for the disappointment of not going to the Yosemite Falls we went to the Great Trees near there, a place so beautiful, so unique, that it has now been made a National Reservation. Then it was a far solitude.

Driving over to the town of Mariposas we left there the carriage and next morning made a sunrise start on horseback with some experienced men to look out for us, and enough pack-mules to carry camp-equipage, blankets, and light supplies for the week's outing.

We were a very light-hearted party. The Colonel had to stay at home, and made himself responsible for no adventures for the youngest boy who, to his bitter indignation, had to be

left; but he was too young to ride all day as did his brother of six years, often carrying before him on the saddle "Fanny" his inseparable terrier. "Fan" was not to come and was shut up, but some miles from the house she joined the carriage, panting, her tongue out, wriggling herself into a letter S, and wagging her tail off begging to be forgiven and taken along. You cannot willingly disappoint a child or a dog when they love you, so "Fan" went camping too.

We were charmed by the pure exquisite morning air growing sweeter, more incense-bearing, as we advanced through the splendid gloom of this pine forest which makes a fitting approach to the Giant Trees.

All a long lovely spring day we traveled through it, stopping about three o'clock where a fine spring and a farm clearing made desirable camping-ground. We had made only about fourteen miles, but we had to travel step by step in Indian file along the narrow mule-trail,

and it was continuous ascent. With an occasional rugged steep dip and then a climb up the opposite bank where the mountain was seamed by small ravines, we followed this narrow bridle-path which wound among the trees. They stood as close as their great size permitted and the sunlight, high, high above, only filtered down in golden rays and splashes on the thick dark carpet of pine-tags, grasses and forget-me-nots; these crowded to border the trail, and the flowers were of a larger size and more vivid blue than we had ever seen.

They made stretches of clear blue far into the forest shades. The odor of vanilla was everywhere and we soon fixed it as coming from a low orchid-like plant whose brown sheath of narrow leaves inclosed a single white flower the shape and size of a pigeon's egg. We were constantly delighted with new flowers, and as we ascended came to the red spike of the snow-flower.

As our day wore on and a little fatigue was

added to the solemn unbroken silence of the forest, the chatting and laughing ceased, and we were glad at one very rough though shallow ravine to dismount, and after crossing it on foot (and all-fours) make a halt. Our experienced men made a miniature fire among stones and gave us refreshing tea in tin cups.

The grandeur of this silent forest, this "green solitude where awful silence dwells," told on us all; trees of six and eight feet in diameter, rising straight as masts over a hundred feet, the golden-green canopy through which high above only a mist of sunlight came, made a cathedral dignity that hushed us.

"This is the forest primeval."

We came on the farm-clearing toward three o'clock, where the raw plank house, the huge stumps of felled trees, were in shocking contrast, nor did we care to be near the barn-yard.

"Do make the camp out of sight and sound

and smell of the ugly place," which was done. The hospitable women pressed on us the shelter of their new house — that we should prefer to camp out when a good house could be had amused them. "I guess you've not seen much camping — we have." But we were glad of the abundant milk and buttermilk and eggs we got from them.

How Hannah rejoiced in it all! So did I, but I had my long, charming experience of the coast-country camping in 1849, and there is a delight to a first experience that is charming, which does not fully come again. Our beds were made of fresh hay; on the hay were piled many layers of hemlock boughs — the soft outer ends; one gets critical of quality in tree boughs as bedding; then new uncut blue blankets were unrolled and laid full length across the high elastic pile where we were to sleep in a long row, Hannah, myself, and the children, with little "Fan" as postscript. It was so high a pile we had to take it with a running jump.

The men's camp was off by the spring and where smoke would not blow toward us.

What a good feast we made. What appetites, what sleep! Big stars were close overhead, perfumed mountain air was blowing soft around us — it was too bad we knew so little of it, for I think we all fell asleep while exclaiming in delight over our springy bed, most welcome after the day in the saddle, when immediately it was again day; the tender, serene baby-hour of opening day. A screen of blankets made our dressing-room where plenty of fresh water with French soap and Russia towels took off the rough edge (and dust) of camp-life.

Then for the breakfast. A good camp cook can make excellent bread midway between the Spanish *tortilla* and the Australian "damper" by kneading well flour and water and a little salt — no sort of yeast or baking stuff, but strong working of the dough which is baked in thin cakes on a griddle, a most palatable, wholesome bread eaten when hot and brittle, and

leathery when cold. But we had it hot, with eggs and slips of bacon, tea and coffee, and lots of hot and cold milk, and orange marmalade "by request." And appetite! of a quality too eager and keen to be known apart from such out-door life.

Then again to our saddles.

We had thought nothing could be more nobly beautiful than the forest we crossed the day before, but the new day brought us into enchanting natural parks of grassy uplands and fir and hemlock growths in varying stages; the layered boughs, tipped with the lighter green of the spring growth, rested in tent-like spread on soft young grass and wild flowers. It was all gracious and open and smiling with, at times, a break in the trees giving us a glimpse across the valley below of the near Yosemite range. And in the fresh stir of morning air we laughed and sang and "were glad we were alive," when —

"What is that? Is that?" and hush of wonder and awe subdued us.

There, blocking the way as a light-house might, rose the mighty bulk of a tawny-barked tree over thirty feet in diameter. Solid, straight, uprearing its wonderful column unbroken by any limb for a hundred feet.

Standing apart, with natural clearings round about them, and contrasted by the smiling young firs, they were overwhelmingly grand.

The impression was absolutely new — and without comparison.

. . . . . .

That day we only rode near them, taking them in from various points of view. Extending our ride to where by climbing higher we saw the near outline of the Yosemite range with its further background of the snow-covered Sierra, and beyond, the white glitter of Carson's Peak.

It was after seeing this country that Starr King said to me he felt there that that was the original conception of the Deity — "the first rough sketch of our world — but, remembering

He had to create man He continued his work on a suitably lowered scale."

Our return led through a tract lately burned over in a forest fire, and by the time we got down to our camp at Clarke's Meadows by the bank of the rushing Merced River, we were completely blackened with the charcoal dust. We had begun with veils, but they interfered with clear sight and were soon in the saddle pockets, and this charcoal penetrated everything.—gloves and sleeves were hardly a barrier as our horses' feet continued stirring up the sooty dust.

"Clarke's Meadows," then a far-off and solitary spot, was made a National Park, and Clarke its first guardian. He welcomed us to his domain and had been shooting us birds and young squirrels, and cutting hemlock tips for our night's rest.

But first we had to get rid of our charcoal coating. The Merced up here comes down foaming and tumbling over great bowlders of

granite and eddying off into still pools of emerald brightness of sparkling water. Fringed by low evergreen growths and hidden by great bowlders these were ideally lovely bathing-places, but shriek on shriek followed the first plunge, for the water was melted ice and snow — so keenly cold it cut and stung us. However, after the first scarlet burn a glorious reaction set in and the exhilaration was beyond telling in words.

We had appetites that would have given flavor to our gloves, but the birds and tender young squirrels broiled on sticks before the fire were really delightful, and with pride Clarke drew from the hot ashes potatoes of his own growing.

Again stretched on a luxuriously fragrant elastic hay and hemlock bed, with the tumble and rush of the mountain torrent for music, it was almost too much delight when Hannah's lovely voice breathed out, soft and lingeringly sweet, the serenade from *Don Pasquale:*

"O, summer night,
So softly bright."

Refreshed and full of new life we gave the next day to leisurely enjoyment of this *wonderschün* land (avoiding the charcoal district). Before leaving our horses to explore on foot, the cavalcade rode through a fallen tree, the men on horseback having space above their heads as we filed through this tunneled trunk hollowed out by fire. There were other fallen trees not burned. One had fallen very recently; the earth was still fresh about its singularly shallow roots. With a surveyor's tape we measured a hundred and twenty-six feet of bare trunk before the first bough put out. Walking along the tree to its base we dropped the line which ran out to thirty-two and a half feet, after deducting three feet above the base as allowance for the roots and very slight irregularities where it had rested on the ground. Other measurements gave a gradual but gentle tapering, but it was eighteen feet in diameter where

the boughs began. The boughs of these giant Sequoia are very short, and the cones small; they seem insignificant compared with the vast height and bulk of the trunk. The rugged cork-like bark was curious — fully a foot thick, cinnamon-colored, and in shallow flutings like a roughly-chiseled column. We had a strangely interesting time in this Cathedral of Nature.

As we wanted to return in one day we were early asleep and on the way by fair daybreak. It was only about thirty-six miles in all, and for the last twelve we would have the carriage.

That early morning of the return through the great pine forest was something to remember gratefully.

The friendly people of the farm were horrified by our sunburned faces, scorched and peeling on cheeks and noses from the direct light and heat of the thin rarefied air. "Well, well," one said, "you looked like real ladies, but now you look like movers," and they saw no compensation for such roughing-it.

We kept as good pace as the broken country allowed, and one of our party rode ahead and had the carriage waiting us at the ford below the town of Mariposas.

There was a village of some eighteen hundred Chinese just there by the ford. They were not allowed to live within a mile or so of the town limit. Hannah fancied driving through this Asiatic settlement, and it was certainly a very foreign unusual village with perfectly Chinese aspect. We trotted along its narrow lane of a main street almost brushing the long pendant signs on either side, when we saw a shop-front filled with coarse but gay and pretty crockery. Our escort had gone on into the town of Mariposas and only one horseman remained; the children were on horseback, and my friend and myself in the carriage with only its English coachman.

The alert Chinese shopman answered our signs and brought out to us bowls and jars — we had bought a lot of pretty common-ware

bowls with their decorated China spoons — when we found ourselves suddenly closed in by a swarm of excited Chinese, gesticulating fiercely with shrill clacking angry talk, and converging on us their angry eyes.

What had we done? What was the matter? Burke who had advised our not going through the village made no pause to question "Why?" but rode quickly to the rear of the carriage, making his horse's heels clear the way by digging spurs into it. He shouted to the children to ride ahead "fast," snatching "Fan" from her little master and throwing her in to my care, as he ordered the coachman to use his whip right and left on the crowd and "get off," while he, revolver lifted, waved them back. They only fell back as he aimed into the nearest group.

We dashed off as we were ordered; the cries grew fainter, but we heard no shot, and soon had the relief to see Burke following us up the hill, looking back, revolver lifted.

Nothing more came of it than a big fright to us, and for us, and a wholesome lesson not to intrude among such people. These were miners — mostly the tall muscular mountain-Chinese, such as were afterwards used in tens of thousands in building our overland railways.

What was the matter we never knew. Luckily we had paid for our bowls, but a complaint from me would have quickly resulted in the destruction of their village and the whole of its people being driven away — when we were to blame for going into their village — this is the law of the strong against the weak, especially where any pretext would have been welcome to race-prejudice. So we kept silence and would let nothing be said of it.

As we turned into our own gates the moon was shining bright over the bungalow and the Colonel's white summer clothes made him into a statue by the fountain, where he had waited, listening, and relieved enough to have us all back in the fold; and not even too tired — for

except the accident-boy who put himself in the way of fresh hurts by calmly falling asleep on his horse, and ended the journey asleep on the carriage floor, we were all animated and full of the delights of our brief expedition.

We found waiting us an invitation to a ball. A regular ball, with a printed invitation and a committee of one to explain that our acceptance would certify to its opening a new era of good order and decorum. The Odd Fellows Association had built a Hall and Club rooms in Mariposas, and in giving this opening ball wished our aid in behalf of their good intentions. Of course on this idea we accepted willingly.

But was there ever a Ball Committee that did not get into hot water?

VIII.

THE BALL.

WE quite looked forward to this Ball and were glad of it as visible evidence of the new reign of order, and respect for the established usages of neighborly intercourse.

We had out our prettiest gowns and decided what to wear, and as the town of Mariposas was twelve miles distant we arranged to stay over night and next morning visit some ladies there, and receive any who might want to visit us. Altogether it was to be a bright festival time.

When the whole clouded over.

"The Colonel" was in San Francisco and in his absence something went amiss between the superintendent of the mills and one of the men, who did a most shabby and unmanly thing in revenge.

The superintendent was a cultivated New York man, but with the defect of thinking himself, therefore, superior to "Western" men, and betraying this provincial idea by small airs of superiority. The blacksmith was a young Kentuckian of good family but "wild," who had brought such a letter from Senator Crittenden that he was at once given employment. As health, size and strength were his chief qualifications he took what he could do and became expert in smithy work on machinery and tools.

There were chiefly first-rate men in all the governing positions, but this superintendent lacked that crowning merit, which comes from nature to some and through experience to many, of taking a man at his best and making allowance for what's lacking; not requiring all to come up to an arbitrary standard. Where a narrow-natured man from the East sets his standard in place of the more easy larger limit obtaining in the West, trouble follows.

It did here. But what was unpardonable was the manner of resenting it.

When the superintendent went, as was his habit at the mid-day hour of rest, to botanize along the creek, the blacksmith set upon him and beat him cruelly; not only making an assault on a man he knew carried no weapons, but having with him two of his friends from the village to aid him if needed.

But it was quickly overheard and stopped, and the facts reported to me in the absence of "the Colonel."

I sustained the book-keeper in his intention of immediate dismissal of the Kentuckian — it was absolutely necessary in order to maintain discipline, though as the offender was a "popular man" and the superintendent decidedly not so, there was sure to be personal feeling against this step.

Soon a protest reached me and I was asked to stay proceedings until the Colonel's return.

This I refused, admitting the vexations given,

and the merits of Senator Crittenden's protégé, but allowing nothing to weigh against the outrageously mean attack of three against one.

Then came the further complication that this young Kentuckian was not only an Odd Fellow but very active about the Ball and one of the Committee of Reception.

Hannah felt as I did, that it would be impossible for us to go now. To go, knowingly, to be received by and entertained by a man who had made a singularly cowardly attack on the chief man of our mills, whose conduct had deserved and received instant dismissal from the works, was a contradiction not possible. And yet it was very hard on the other young men that they should lose guests they so much wished to have.

I had to write to the Head of the Order giving him these reasons why we should not be able to attend the Ball, and telling him of the sincere regret it was to me not to be able to take my part in what was a good event in our frontier society.

They are quick to think and quick to act "out West."

Quickly the answer came, fully appreciating my reasons, and asking again that we would come as "the Committee of Reception had been changed."

These thorough people had had other invitations immediately printed, omitting the name of the offending Kentuckian.

An authorized person told me the man's act was strongly condemned and he would most probably not be present; but that he was a very popular man and had a following of friends who were angrily excited and might make trouble if we came. So that it was fair to let us know there might be something unpleasant — not if the better-minded could prevent, but it was in the chances.

I heartily wished we could keep away, but when all the body of Odd Fellows had gone such lengths to meet my feeling, it seemed I must take my risks to show I valued their approval.

So we went. Our good gowns sent forward in the morning to the nice village inn where we were to stay the night, ourselves following in the cool of the afternoon; Hannah and myself in the carriage and, riding ahead on horseback, my daughter with the superintendent, and our invaluable Burke.

We were not in a very holiday humor. The "superior" tone of the superintendent seemed to have increased and be, as it were, justified. The committee had renewed their invitation to him and with it sent a manly letter of regret that one of their Order should have so misconducted himself.

I thought nothing obliged him to go. But he chose to do so and to go with us — though it was flaunting the red flag at the bull.

We were nearing the end of our drive when round the turn of a sharp hill came a small band of horsemen. At their head the tall, broad-shouldered Kentuckian.

I must say "my heart jumped to my throat"

— "he has come out with his friends to turn us back" was my thought. (Burke and Isaac thought even worse.) But these were good Western men, after all, and they just filed by, taking the outer edge of the narrow road, and the big offender touched his broad hat to me in passing. That touched me. I returned his salute with good feeling.

To recognize he had done wrong, to accept punishment and to give this evidence that no further disturbance should be made was truly manly. We felt why he was a "popular man."

We dressed ourselves carefully and behaved our nicest at the Ball. I had asked Burke to let the committee know how sorry I was to break up any part of their ball, and how right and manly I thought it of the Kentuckian to give me this evidence of his intention to prevent trouble.

And then I did my best to make my being there agreeable.

Such healthy, happy-faced young wives and

mothers were there. Girls were few. They were instantly married and in fact were brought there married. It was a very young community. The certainty now of good order and entire propriety had made men willing to bring their wives, some from quite a distance. In several cases the baby too. There were half a dozen of these in a room to the rear where our wraps were laid, and where two beds had been made to accommodate some special friends.

An atmosphere of constraint had prevailed in the beginning, but the good music and the growing enjoyment of the guests changed that into a more natural heartiness and soon it was as animated as need be. The hall was really fine, and though flowers were not yet grown there, native evergreens and artificial flowers, our flag, and abundant lights in handsome chandeliers made it a pretty hall for any place.

The supper was really beautiful as well as excellent. Only those who knew frontier life in those chaotic times realize what unexpected

"finds" one made in unlikely places. The elaborate dishes usual to fine suppers were here in beauty, and for confectionery it was as good in style and delicate excellence as though we were in a large city.

Hannah's outspoken delight and surprise pleased every one — her charming manners and sincere enjoyment of this "wild West" episode propitiated all and effaced any soreness that might have lingered among the friends of the absent.

The german was not a part of the programme, but Hannah suggested a Virginia reel after the supper and it was danced with great spirit, and a gayety, added to by some of the young men — unmarried you may be sure — who had seized the chance while the mothers were at supper to change the cloaks and wraps on the babies and then transfer them to opposite beds, in short, to "mix them babies up." The scene of confusion this created was full of fun, even the bewildered young mothers joining in the

laugh; they were young and happy, having a thoroughly good time in a harmless way, and all was good — even a joke against themselves.

We came away about twelve, but the others kept it up stoutly until daylight did appear.

And so ended happily what had seemed must inevitably be a big disturbance. It was a fine advance in popular feeling since the year before when violence had been accepted as the normal condition, and the sheriff had declined to do his duty and call out a *posse* because, as he said, "it would be no use."

We had our pleasant morning of visits, and making acquaintance with outlying neighbors, and were pressed to visit around to their homes, but the time had come for my friend to return to New York and we had to go home.

She said then and says yet it was, all told, the most delightful three months of her life — that it was so new, so full of large ideas, rubbed out so much ignorance and gave such different views of life, was so full of keen delight in

nature, and that she felt she gave as well as received so much pleasure, that nothing else compared with it.

It was flat without her. The lovely voice was only one of the charms lost to us.

Now the weather was growing into the depressing summer heat. Only heat is too tepid a word to use. Our valley was a trough between high mountain ranges and the only winds came over the treeless hot plains like a furnace blast. Even on a marble-topped table many layers of newspaper had to be put between my arm and the table when I wrote, for flesh could not stand the contact of the heated marble which could not cool off in the hot nights — often it was over ninety degrees at midnight.

As I would not go to San Francisco a camp was made for me on the mountain just back of us, in a spot Isaac knew. It was a steep stony hard climb of nearly five thousand feet, but across the summit, and a little below on the eastern face was a spring of great size, and fine cold

water — a miniature lake; and on the long bench or *plateau*, where was this water, was also a beautiful growth of "States Oak." This was the local name for the large-leaved, deciduous oak — in the valley we had only the small-leaved evergreen oak — one gets very tired of unchanging foliage, of unfalling leaves.

A ride up, and inspection decided "the Colonel" and in a few days we were comfortably installed there. This place had not only the shade and water needed, but a glorious view of the Yosemite which seemed not over ten miles off, though really thirty. The pure and rarefied air destroyed the distance to the sight. This eastern face of our mountain, Mt. Bullion, was in benches with straight steep descents, presenting almost a flat face to the immediate valley thousands of feet below; from which rose opposite in successive curves, like some giant amphitheater, first the low hills then the grand rock-formation of the Yosemite country.

Beyond that still was the snow-capped Sierra

range and, far off, the glistening Carson's Peak caught the first morning light. Dawn came early up there these summer days. The birds began their subdued half-notes about three, then a tremble of gold dust got into the cool gray sky; rarely we had a rosy sunrise, but the many tones of yellows were gorgeous beyond description.

We were in real nature. The birds so unknowing that even woodpeckers sat near on the same fallen trunk, watching us intently and curiously. And a quail led her young brood regularly every morning to pick up the rice and crumbs scattered about the camp fire. Isaac was our camp-cook, and like a true hunter protected the creatures he did not need to kill for food. Incessant, causeless shooting, betrays the novice or a cold hard nature.

We had our riding horses up there and found superb views and most pleasant rides along the level crest of the ridge. Once up there, a fairly easy way for horses could be followed

for miles, but it was not prudent for us to be far out of range from our camp. But it was good to go about easily and see such a stretch of view. To the east was all the Yosemite and the mountains beyond, while to the west we looked over the lower range that hedged in our valley, down to the San Joaquin plains, crossed at intervals by the steel-like glitter of the Merced, the Stanislaus, the Tuolumne and other rivers, and far off the dark timber-belt showed where the San Joaquin River bounded all on the west.

The beautiful golden pheasant with its two long glittering tail feathers dragging (as a turkey does) in sign of agitation, did not fly, but just moved aside from our horses; and the pretty crested quail with its tuft of velvety black feathers was not frightened. We gathered the most lovely wild flowers, fresher, more vivid and larger than those in the valley.

Not a human sound to mar the beautiful nature. But near sunset a welcome long-

echoing Indian-call, the survival of very differing camp-life, announced the coming of "the Colonel." Then Isaac bestirred himself and savory odors came across from his fire, where we would gather and make the dinner-supper that closed the day. For with the dark came sleep. There was no sleeping after that golden sunrise flooded the air. And the days brought too much exercise, too much thinking, for a busy man to forego his sleep.

On Sundays we had lots to talk of and to read together — I being an idler had all the time for reading, and there was much to read. The Sadowa campaign was in progress and we had our English and French journals, war-maps and illustrated papers, and the home mail, and some good books. Buckle's *History of Civilization* we read here in fit surroundings. We were in great comfort and content, and charmed to have found such a refuge from the heat until with the fall rains, fresh air returned to the valley. Then we would leave our beautiful camp.

IX.

THE CAMP ON MT. BULLION.

AS we were to remain up here until the rains began much trouble was taken to make it comfortable camping. A board floor, raised well above the ground to disconcert frogs and snakes and such forest creatures, was pronounced indispensable. But how to haul planks where it was hard scrambling for mountain-bred horses and mules?

Planks were hauled on the mining road to the mines, three miles from the village. Here there was a dip in the range and the crest of the ridge could be met and followed back three miles to our camp, which was abreast of the village. Some clearing work was done to open the way, then the planks were lashed to the sides of oxen used to mountain work, and in this way the

flooring was hauled along the crest. It was troublesome but it was a success, and a great comfort.

The canvas roof was secured to four young oaks growing near together; their inner boughs were lopped back leaving only a leafy dome which not only kept us cool with the thick large leaves, but their dancing shadows frescoed our ceiling beautifully. One wall we lowered and fastened to the floor, but the other three sides were stretched out to trees — giving broad piazzas where on the well-cleared ground our steamer-chairs, camp stools and folding-tables (by ox-train), made luxurious comfort.

Mattresses also were brought up and were laid on piles of fragrant heather. A plank set edgewise across the floor restrained the heather and kept tidy the open part of the broad, raised floor. Experts in tent-life will recognize this was elegance combined with comfort.

Smaller canvas houses with no floor or roof, other than spreading oak boughs, made dress-

ing-rooms. With india-rubber bath tubs one is independent and the sun and fresh air coming direct upon the skin added to the reviving effects of this mountain life.

The growth of fine deciduous oaks covered a long space, some miles, and was a famous resort for grizzly bears; their "wallows" were all around about. With the acorns, the great spring and the fresh cool air, it was a fixed resort for them in the acorn season, which, fortunately, was not near. For animals are more bound by the "correct season" in their migrations than even fashionables on their tours. It would not have been amusing to come back from a ride and find the Great Bear, the Middle-sized Bear and the Teeny-weeny-little Bear sitting in our chairs.

But it was all peaceful and beautiful beyond telling. The grand beauty of the Yosemite country, lying just across from us like a great panorama in a vast amphitheater, was of endless attraction. Sunrise and sunset made marvels

of color and varying effects, and the still blaze of golden noon had its own splendid charm.

The rides were always a delight. Nature could not be more beautiful and had also the rare charm of being untouched. It was indeed

. . . . . "a land
Where no man had been since the world begun."

With the milk and eggs and freshly-killed chickens came up — on horseback all — the daily mail. The progress of the Sadowa Campaign became increasingly interesting. The lowered wall of our canvas house was soon papered over with war maps and likenesses of men making the names since so famous. Bismarck was lifting the crowns from the heads of smaller kings and making ready to place the Imperial Crown on the head of his own German king. And we began then the personal interest in the young Crown-Prince who had so lately given the bit of white heather to the Daughter of England. From his father decorating him with the Cross

of Merit, to the last long struggle against death he was always a noble figure, modest, brave, patient, honorable and true, a real hero.

Apart as we were from ordinary life and lifted above detail, great events and figures of history found themselves on natural surroundings among these grand features of nature.

. . . . . .

To the great delight of the little boys the service-berries were getting ripe; a larger, more juicy, richer-flavored form of our whortleberry.

Children who have the disadvantage of only town-life, or the opera bouffe life of "summer resorts," know nothing of the many and progressive delights of country children. To the town boy an apple is represented by pennies and a fruit stall. He knows nothing of the education in weather, in patience, in observation of the many phases that lead from the icicled tree to its rosy blossoms, and the little green knobs he eyes without fingering, on to the fully-ripened

fruit, which has for him a bouquet of meaning and flavor and triumph money cannot buy.

One day in the early morning first one then many Indian women climbed into view from below on the eastern side; smiling, pointing to the big, conical baskets strapped to their backs, and settling to work to gather the berries which they did in orderly busy fashion; going down to their valley at nightfall with full baskets. But leaving untouched the bushes near our camp, which I thought very nice of them as this was their harvest of a luxury. They were not the Indians we knew, but even more Indian, so to speak.

They were so pleased with an impromptu luncheon of hot rice with sugar, and a dessert of jam on crackers. They squatted around the spring — in Scotland it would have been called a "tarn" — eating slowly with many soft laughs of pleasure. Something sweet to eat and pictures to look at made for them ideal delight. Pictures of horses in the illustrated papers, especially battle-scenes, excited them intensely.

They folded them carefully, wrapping them in cloths and carried them off to their huts; to be a source of wonder and mind-opening never imagined by the artists.

This was all that broke our quiet, until one morning after "the Colonel" had gone down to the mines there came a group of Indian men, who made for Isaac's part of the camp and soon were in earnest conference.

I was not paying attention to this, but presently Burke the invaluable (who was always on guard when the Colonel was off) came over with a disquieting message.

The taller of the three Indians was a young chief and warrior of renown belonging to a restless and fighting tribe of Indians to the southwest of us. The others were his aids-de-camp; they all knew some English and Spanish and our men understood some local Indian words and both were familiar with sign-language.

After many annoyances from, and smaller conflicts with the whites, this chief's tribe had

been attacked, unprovoked, they said, by miners in force, on mining-ground which they held as theirs; and they saw all Indians must band together for protection. They had retaliated on smaller parties of whites, and now it was any whites against any Indians, and, maybe, any Indians against any whites.

All the Indians their side the range must stand by one another. Their runners were out assembling the young men. The long bench on which our camp was, lay on one line they must travel in assembling as they were to come from across the Merced (our boundary). This young chief was also from an outlying tribe, but, as he said, his people knew about "Don Flemon" and that he was a friend to Indians, and that his women were up in the mountain by the big spring (Indians always know all they need to know). For that, he came to say we must go down and be safe in our house by the mill and village. For the Indians coming to join him might not be good to any whites. They did not

know about us and he could not stay away from his people to protect us. And he did not want harm to come to Don Flemon's family.

This was a break-up.

Our own men saw the risk was too great. "There's always enough ornery Injuns," Isaac said, "to try a little stealing — horses, or anything they fancy — then there'd be trouble."

It was contrary to his ideas to take a woman into council, but the young chief was so anxious to make us safe that he came over with Isaac and Burke when they crossed to tell me of this.

He remained standing too, as they did, with his eyes a little turned away but listening and noticing intently, his whole young lithe bronze figure rigid from intentness. Perhaps he had some Spanish blood, for he was of higher breed and more commanding air than any Indian I had seen up there.

The one drawback to our beautiful camp, for me, was the rarefied air at this elevation which made me often very dizzy and faint; lying down

with mustard-leaves on the chest partly counteracted this. I was lying back now in a steamer chair and it made me smile to myself to see what an odd reception I was holding, but it was no laughing matter.

"How soon must we go? To-day? the night? or to-morrow?" I spoke in Spanish. *Mañana* is a word ingrained in Spanish countries.

"*Cuando vamos — ahora? la noche? o' mañana?*"

"*Mañana,*" spoke up the bronze, but without looking at me; then to Isaac with one finger lifted from his closed hand: "*Una noche — no mas.*" Pointing over and downwards to our valley: "*Anda mañana.*"

"The Colonel" found it wise to move us back home, though the heat was cruel. But we had had about six weeks of real camping in the solitudes of most beautiful and grand nature. Enough to leave unequalled pictures forever in memory.

The awful heat was too much and we were all sent down to the cool sea air of San Francisco,

and matters being now quite in order we settled into our lovely home there named by Starr King our "Lodge by the Golden Gate;" where the waters of the great bay washed the rocks of our headland and we looked down over roses and geraniums to the decks of passing ships making their way out to the Pacific.

Here the war found us in 1861.

When I came back into my old home at St. Louis to find such discord, such dangers and such malice, envy and all uncharitableness, that the Sierra life with its mining riot, the Indian troubles, all the things that seemed hard to bear there were light by comparison.

. . . . . .

I had thought I was done for always with frontier and camp experiences, but there is no "never" and no "forever."

After many years of repose we were again in old familiar scenes, but wilder, more fantastically dreary, more truly remote from civilization than I had ever before met with.

The sparse settlers always spoke of "going inside" when they went into California, for Arizona was truly "outside" of all usual life. Now a brief ten years has changed all that; one transcontinental railway crosses it at the southern and another at its northern end, and shorter lines of railroad connect them. So this old travel is only the memory of a troubled dream.

But there was not a mile of railroad within the Territory when we went there; the Southern Pacific ended with the railway bridge spanning the Colorado — the dividing line between California and Arizona. A question of taxes rose between the Territory and the Railway so they built no more road until that should be fairly settled.

Meantime you dropped from the travel of full civilization to untouched nature, at Yuma.

Strange-looking nature to American eyes,

> "A dreary waste of stagnant sand
> Stretching afar like ocean's strand;"

the tawny yellow of the sand-waste cut by the deep-rolling, dull-yellow waters of the Colorado; scattered about in irregular lines and groups the brown-yellow adobe houses, one-storied, flat-roofed, with door and window mere gaps left in the wall; over all the fierce red-yellow glare of sun-fire rather than sunshine. Not a tree, not a bush, nor a blade of grass.

It looked like far-away heathen lands — awfully lonesome from the absence of every accustomed home-sight. But to us came a familiar and dear object — the blue uniform of our army; like our flag it only makes the true feeling it has earned when we come upon it in far-away places. It meant now a host of delightful things. We found waiting a comfortable ambulance with its big handsome mules, and the officer in charge of the Quartermaster's Station at Yuma took us to his quarters, where we found everything that intelligence, order, cleanliness and kindness could do against conditions the most unfavorable.

Throughout our far wild Western countries these military outposts are the beacon lights of civilization; they, in their way, do missionary work too — and are not without their own form of martyrdom.

Here we rested two days; then a long farewell to all "use and wont" and a plunge into the untried. Into an experience that cannot be repeated, for all is changed now that the solitudes are crossed by railways, and with them have come people and busy life.

Deep down in the silent depths of the hearts of most women who have had the life of uprooting and transplanting that goes to make the new life of far countries, must lie the Scotch wail:

> "*Oh it's hame! hame! I fain would be*
> *Hame again to my ain countree.*"

Often and often I have met this. Though it was but a passing phase with me yet the chances of separation add to its pain, and these patient

pioneer women knew that the men burned their ships and took no backward look — it is always the woman who looks lingeringly to what she is leaving, who watches for the last sight of her sinking ship with a sinking heart. Then, they rise to their work and do it patiently, bravely, cheerfully. But the old home, the early associations are all there "deeply buried from human sight," and start into the bright life of undying youthful memories at the touch of sympathy.

X.

A "FAR COUNTREE."

"YOU frighten me. You talk as though we were going to the hot place itself."

"So you are, nearly. Äden may be hotter, but the sea helps it — Yuma is the hottest, I rather think."

Of the four men at table three knew Yuma and two had also been at Äden, so their comparisons were from personal experience. It was a hot night of summer, in Washington, itself a most uncomfortable summer climate, but the heat was alleviated in every possible way. The dining-room looked into a square where old trees and lawns, and a generous fountain freshened the night air. A parasol shade of fringed green silk kept in its cool shade those sitting around the table and left

bright light only on the center piece of flowers that nearly covered it — lovely fringed Japan hollyhocks, their whiteness veiled by the maidenhair fern that shaded the flowers and bordered them. All was in contrast to our coming journey through hot desert sands of which we were speaking. General Sherman, a Russian diplomat who had been round the world, and our host, lately minister to Austria but in his young days an officer of our Navy who had had his part in the taking of California; he had also been part of my charming first experience of camping travel in California in 1849.

Three of these present knew the realities of Arizona and Yuma, and General Sherman, who was about making an inspection tour that would carry him there again, heartily pitied me while he and our host devised means to mitigate the inevitable suffering from the heat. Beyond Yuma there was no railway, and the most elementary forms of transportation only, but it was the Government's depot for all military trans-

portation. Orders were sent to Yuma to have what was needed ready for us, and the young officer in command there did not let the order shrink in his handling.

A perfect "outfit" was ready for us, and when we saw the mail and passengers started off in the only local transportation to be had we realized the kind forethought of General Sherman and General Beale. By comparison we should be like Elijah taken up in a heavenly chariot — that "sweet charrut" I used to hear the plantation negroes sing of.

Passengers and mail bags, and express boxes, were closely packed on an uncovered buck-board with four horses, such haggard, over-driven bronchos that Mr. Bergh would have had their ragged harness taken off immediately. On this machine of torture, open to the blinding glare of sun and sand, the passengers stayed night and day, only getting off for meals or to be robbed.

Seeing this I looked back no more, though

the officer who had taken us to his quarters told me to look my last at the returning train as its locomotive was shrieking off — "You will not see such a lovely sight again."

As we had neared Arizona our train had met that with General Sherman on board. Our trains halted a little for him to come for a talk with us. He was just from Prescott (our destination) and had come down from that mountain part of the country in the delightful new ambulance prepared for us, and told us the driver was the best and most careful they had in Arizona. "And you'll need all the care he can use. I pity you — I pity you. Going over that road there were places where I shut my eyes and held my breath. You will cry, and say your prayers." He was through the rough part of his inspection tour and waved us a farewell from the platform of his special car as it whirled him back to accustomed ways of living.

Such a journey as we made then cannot be repeated; for two great overland railways now

cross Arizona, one at the south, the other at the north, and short railroads connect them, opening up wooded and better watered country, while irrigation has worked its sure wonders elsewhere. As a record showing the quick progress of settlement of our far lands a letter written by me at that time has its interest:

PRESCOTT, Arizona Territory.
November 21, 1878.

"You know something of rough travel in our western country, but never have you seen such difficulties surmounted as bar the way between us up here on this eagle's perch and Yuma where the railway ends. It is but two hundred and thirty miles of distance, but distance is not the matter. Sand, rock, heat, sharp flinty table-lands between sharper, rock-covered mountains — always climbing up and up — no water anywhere except at wells long distances apart, until about thirty miles from here when the small creeks and pine timber begin. We are over

six thousand feet up and a profile of the route would be like giant steps with few and shallow landings — you can picture the climb from the base at Yuma, sixty feet above sea level, to this six thousand feet of elevation at Prescott. The *mesas* are table-lands partaking of the nature of the nearest hills: sand near Yuma, gravel and baked earth further on, then a rock, black and glittering like anthracite coal, vitrified by volcanic action, with never a blade of grass or sign of water, and for trees only cactus growths.

"Begin with us at the military quarters at Yuma; thick-walled adobe buildings with broad verandas and real windows and doors — very needed against sand storms. These are on a low bluff above the swift muddy Colorado, while below to the land side lies the mud-built ancient Indian-Mexican pueblo, looking like a damaged brick-kiln, and nearly as heated.

"We stayed with the pleasant lonesome young

officer two days while the ambulances were packed and all made ready for 'the desert travel.' Major Lord had sent forward and bespoken the water needed at the water stations, and our start was timed so as not to interfere with the supply needed by the mail stage.

"Our ambulance was a large, high, well-swung coach for four, with the driver's seat for two, all under the same projecting roof. Six of the finest possible mules, nearly sixteen hands high bright bays, and in every way perfectly matched, made our team. The quartermaster might well be proud of them — so was the head teamster 'Mac,' who was deserving of all General Sherman's praise and who did take all care possible to avoid rough jerks but — weren't we bruised! All army things keep to the blue and our coach with its blue body, canvas sides, and russet leather lining was worthy the United States coat of arms painted on the driving box. A less new and handsome but excellent ambulance with six strong brown mules was for others o

our party and light baggage, while another six mule wagon-ambulance carried heavier baggage, kegs of water and feed for the mules, and our tent and camp equipage; for we were to eat, sleep and be in the open for eight days and nights. The teams having to go through without change could only make thirty miles a day; the heat, the want of water and shade, and the hot sand and then rocky way made these thirty miles very wearing. The whole 'outfit' was as complete and comfort-giving as the quartermaster's experience and good-will, and the resources of 'Uncle Sam' could furnish. We made an imposing procession as we wound from among the low-built mud houses out upon the trackless sands of the Gila plain piloted by Major Lord driving himself in a small buckboard with two gay young horses. Then came the halt for a good-by and many thanks for all his thought and trouble for our comfort. His eyes were nearly destroyed by several years at Yuma. He had reported their condition to

Washington some months since and asked for change of duty to a cooler station and where he could have an oculist care for them, but his relief had not come. It was a great pleasure to me that my letter to Washington about this found immediate attention and the poor burned eyes were soon transferred to Philadelphia.

"We had made a very early start, but it was hot and blinding notwithstanding our thick blue veils and the lowered canvas curtains. We had dropped into silent attention, to avoid the jerking and rolling which stones and roots and want of any road must bring, when the grinding was changed for a forward rush of the mules, cheers and calls of encouragement from the teamsters, and behold we had plunged into the broad Gila River and the teams were all swimming, scrambling, snorting, the teamsters talking to them a language they understood, and quick all hands were ready for accidents, for the wide Gila is famous for quicksands, shifting sands and treacherous undercurrents. I knew

of it, well, and was horribly afraid — a ford any way is a detestable grind, and one seems getting swept away; but in all this noise of men and animals, with the water up to the coach body, though I was dizzy and scared, old training told, and I was praised for my silence then, and later, when we wound along many a sharp turn of narrow road cut in the rock where there was not a foot to spare between the wall of rock on one side and the precipice alongside. General Sherman was right — I shut my eyes, and tried not to think.

"We made our first camp on the bank of the full rolling Colorado. It was good to see even its discolored waters where all else was sand. As it was still hot we were sent to wait inside the 'hotel' until the sun was lower and the camp in order; a small one-story plank building, but with board floors freshly sprinkled. It had the fine name of 'Castle Dome,' but was lodging-house, mail station, store and mining

depot for all the mines near around. To one of these mines was bound a most agreeable New York man to whom we had offered a seat in our conveyance; and in the Castle Dome we came upon traces of another. We were shown into his room as the coolest place — the roof and sides were interlaced cactus; the *ocotilla* which makes natural lathing from ten to twenty feet long. It grows in one compact thorny fluted column, and when it is ripe it falls apart from the top, making building and roofing material, which plastered with mud answers every purpose. The room proper was dug down like a cellar, for coolness, and had an earth floor; the rough-hewn little bedstead stood in four kerosene cans kept filled with water to intercept tarantulas and other such local pests. Empty goods-boxes did duty for dressing and writing tables. It was all clean and, relatively, cool. The young men of the place brought us fresh water, and candies (in tins), and made the unfailing atmosphere of welcome.

"Good cologne water and bay rum were by the tin washing basin, and the writing table had a Russia leather blotting book and writing appointments that made you sorry to see such habits fastened to such a spot — more so when there caught my eye over the writing table, nailed to the mast that propped the sloping roof, a little half-worn bronze kid slipper with its tarnished steel buckle and frayed bow. We said at once 'He has nailed his colors to the mast — he will not give up until Victory or Death ends the fight with Fortune — the little shoe must have its path made smooth, and this exile is here to battle bravely, bearing the brunt alone that she may not know the rough ways of life.

"The owner of the room was, we found, managing a mine some miles off. He had lived there nearly a year!

"While we waited I wrote at his table a word back to my own young people, and then wrote our thanks to the unknown for the shelter of his room, and told him what his writing things and

the slipper said to us — the pretty footprint on these far sands — with a 'Take heart, Brother.' *

"By this our tent was set and the sun sinking, and we could go out to our camp where we found it very nice and home-like. Our capable Chinese, a good cook and a good man of the upper class of trained Chinese servants, had been given to us in San Francisco, by an army family 'ordered East.' Major Lord had had prepared a most comfortable complete 'outfit' of folding table and camp chairs, and now by the tent the blue-painted table held its block tin tea equipage, while Mary, trim and tidy as always (with even a white apron on), handed us afternoon tea. She would come, though we told her it was all so new and different. 'If you

* Two years after I met a lady who introduced herself as "the mother of the bronze slipper," the nicest kind of nice New York woman. Her son had sent them my note because it was, he said, so curiously true to his feeling about the slipper and to his work. It is pleasant to know the mine had sold well and it was all smooth for the little shoe.

can stand it sure I can stand it too,' and she has most helpingly.*

"The young New York man who was to leave us here had recently been two years in Spain as attaché to our Legation there. We knew his people on Stuyvesant Square in New York and we were all amused by the contrast of our talk with its framing. The teamsters had made a settlement with the ambulances and animals and their fire, farther back from the river, and off from our fire and tent. As the shadows fell and the moon came up the sound of the river was cool and gave a respite from the day's glare and wide blank.

"Chung proved to be an expert in preparing tinned things and his grave decorous manner and Chinese dress made him a good accessory in our desert picture.

"I had the ambulance cushions, the others just rolled in their blankets and lay on the sand,

"Mary," still "on duty," is now in her twenty-fourth year of service with us.

the canvas floor of the tent helping greatly in tidy effects. We women-kind were pleased to find no stiffness follow; we slept soundly and rose refreshed while it was yet starlight, for 'early' was the good-night word. Again Chung took rank as an acquisition, for he was punctual to his orders. We had our early tea and coffee and cakes of thin fresh baked bread by the light of the fire and a waning moon and stars. The tent was struck, everything packed, the wagons in line, and we, seated in our ambulance, waited for the signal to start which came when the hands of that faithful old chronometer which has timed so many observations in wild lands marked 6 A. M. Then we led off and the others followed. This was our regular routine. We traveled on until about eleven, when the halt was made to wash out the mules' mouths from kegs of water carried along, and give them a half-hour's rest. Then on until two or three o'clock, our stop being regulated by the water station.

"Each morning (while we were fresh) the great novelty of the whole thing was delightful, but with advancing day and heat I fear there was but the one idea — the getting through to the day's end. The stern black mountains like monster coal heaps and the strange cactus growths were soon all shimmering in a hot haze and one's eyes burned with looking out, but they were sights to be remembered. Fancy columns of gray-green growths twenty, thirty feet high all about like obelisks — others like giant candelabra, some like a skeleton apple-tree tipped with tattered old palm-leaf fans. All these spiky with thorns. There was one cactus I quite hated, it looked so silly — a column six, ten, and more, feet high, with just one projecting limb — a stupid finger-post pointing to nowhere. I saw, on the second day, one of these that seemed to move — 'the shimmering from the heat makes that cactus seem to sway.' It did move and as we neared lifted its hat. It was a man in dust-colored flannels covered with gritty dust who

had ignorantly attempted to walk to Prescott. He would have died from thirst and heat had we not met. We took him up and gave him a lift to Prescott where he found good employment, and was very useful to the teamsters on the road. This was the only human being we met. The only living thing except an occasional "cotton tail" which kept Frank's Winchester rifle in practice. Thor insisted on leaping down to follow the first rabbit — he never tried it again, for cactus thorns and flints of vitrified rock attacked his high-bred feet used only to carpets and well-kept roads. He is too old a dog to learn new ways and we just love him for what he is, not for what he might have been. He is not happy, he often looks, 'Why are we here? let us go home.'

"The water stations were not pools and fountains with palm-trees and green grasses around — but usually a 'bush-arbor' covering a well-mouth with a small shanty alongside — all out on the bare plain; very ugly, but vitally necessary.

"At one place we found the man of the station either had not the water in his well, as he said, or he had sold it — any way we could not camp there. That was bad, but the mules must have their water; so we pushed for a place he told us of, off to the side of the traveled route, among hills of rock where were some natural reservoirs, 'the Horse Tanks.' Also some Indians, who looked on this natural water supply as theirs and resented its being interfered with. Our eighteen mules and thirteen people would be a big 'interference.' 'They won't like it,' said the water-man, 'but there's enough of you to have your way' — a nice prospect for us!

"It was but four miles, but the roughest sort of broken gullied foot-hill country once we left the level skirting it. It seemed the poles must break in the abrupt descent and steep climb of the narrow gullies that seamed the way.

"The Tanks were in a narrow pocket among steep hills, and as we neared them the mules smelled the water and hurried most uncomfort-

ably — they cried out and could hardly be guided and were unruly in being unharnessed.

"The three gentlemen to whom we had offered place upon our transportation, the Cactus-man, the General and Frank were all for the time active aids to the teamsters.

"It would never do to let a mule get loose; the Indians hidden all about in the rocks would make short work of it. We helped Chung get the tea. There was no wood — it was funny to see us grappling with the tough roots of bushes, for daylight was going fast and we were not to show a light after dark. Poor Thor was wretched. His feet got filled with cactus thorns — he tried to pull them out with his mouth and got them in his tongue and through the night his young mistress was patiently getting them out from his mouth and soothing him with arnica.

"All night the men kept guard. The mules were tightly fastened and watched and were rampageous. We made off at earliest light with only a cold mouthful all round, but an

early and longer halt for a good luncheon evened up our scant dinner and breakfast.

"Our last night out it was so bitterly cold in the narrow defile where we camped that no one slept well. Men were moving about and keeping up the fires all through the night. It was an uneasy camp.

"The mail stage coming along the next night was waylaid in that defile, the horses cut out and carried off, and several persons badly wounded in the fighting. Two of the highwaymen were caught and punished. They confessed having been ready the night before to attack our party, but we were too many, and too much on the alert; not only from the cold, but because it was a place of evil fame (which I was not let to know) and our excellent head teamster was relieved in the morning when we got beyond the long defile into the wide open country."

From that old letter let me tell something of what we found in this mountain town; the

"Far West" has its oases of pleasant people even in its wildest wilds. We had come the last morning through what is in local parlance "a white man's country" — timber and creeks, fenced-in lands, cattle farms and saw-mills, and as we neared Prescott comfortable farms and country homes; to be met near the town by a most pleasant welcome — quite a procession in carriages and on horseback. As it was Sunday the people along the unpaved mountain street just waved hats and handkerchiefs, but we felt welcomed. And when we stopped at a small cottage a real surprise waited us. Its kindest of owners had moved into a neighboring house and theirs was to be ours until we found what suited us. (The "hotel" was impossible.) Imagine the contrast to our camping — the utmost elegance and comfort and such beauties as a grand piano, a harp, pale blue satin hangings and furniture, books in number, engravings, sketches in water-colors, every appointment of a lovely home. A big key was laughingly

given me with "Lock us out until you have a house of your own." Meantime a charmingly delicate dinner was ready. Our Chinese had joined theirs, and in short for nearly a week we actually had to accept all this hospitality. We all dined together and some nice persons were daily added until we got the run of people.

"There is a wonderfully good small society here — people who would be agreeable to know anywhere. The head-quarters of this department are here which adds the officers and their families. Some are unusually agreeable. These, with some of the citizens and leading lawyers, have made up a really remarkable Dramatic Club. They have built a pretty theater that seats about four hundred people. The Post band is orchestra. There are some well-trained voices, and with a grand piano, a harp, and a violinist of real skill, occasional concerts are given. The stock company numbers several really beautiful and charming women — officers'

wives and ladies living in town — acting far above the average professional. Among the men is one Colonel of the army who comes close to Wallack in light drama, and one lawyer of rare voice and ability — while others "go in" willingly and well too for all they can contribute. And the audiences take the points well and encouragingly — admission a dollar, which goes to the theater fund, or sometimes to a charity, a widow or a sick person, or the Sisters' Hospital, that picket-guard of humane care.

"Imagine this up here where the real savage Indian still lives, moves and takes the being out of white people. Six years ago they scalped people on this spot. The outposts of our skimp little army had long and hard work to bring about the present safety to settlements and miners — it was real tragedy then.

"Now a fine brick schoolhouse with a roll of two hundred scholars stands secure, where the Indians held rule. . . . This school and its scholars interest me. I go every Friday and

give the upper class a 'history-talk,' not such as we used to have in the beautiful home library, for their minds are not full as yours was. But on the skeleton of their outline historical study I try to put flesh and garments and infuse life and motive into certain figures.

"You know the kind of young men in our Far West who really toil to reach knowledge and training; there are some of these, up to twenty and older, who have only their elementary knowledge of experience in this untouched country. To them history and biography are fairyland. You can imagine how grateful it is to me to be welcomed into the class-room by their clear eager eyes, to be asked such intelligent questions and to know I have added to their thoughts and ideas in a wholesome way, and that they are spurred to new effort by my interest in them.

"Strangely different, and without new force as this life is for me, I can impart grace and warmth to these aspiring young American minds, and that makes me like my Fridays.

'You're a blessed lunatic,' one pleasant woman said to me; but I know it is a lunacy twice blessed, for it keeps down the unavailing home-sickness to see how other young lives are the happier for even this little of the dear home teachings."